

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, April 26, 2012, at 11:30 a.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 509 and 510; that there be 30 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; and that any related statements be printed in the RECORD, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

STOP THE STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATE HIKE ACT

Mr. REED. Mr. President, on July 1, approximately 7.4 million college students will see the interest rate double on their student loans unless Congress takes action. For every year we fail to act, borrowers will pay \$1,000 more in interest on their loans. In January, I introduced S. 2051, the Student Loan Affordability Act, to maintain the subsidized student loan interest rate at the current 3.4 percent. Today, I am proud to join my colleagues Senator BROWN of Ohio and Senator HARKIN, the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, in sponsoring the Stop Student Loan Interest Rate Hike Act. This legislation is a fully paid for, 1-year extension of the 3.4-percent interest rate for subsidized student loans.

There is bipartisan support for keeping interest rates low. Governor Romney has endorsed a temporary extension of the current 3.4 percent rate. Two-thirds of Republican Senators voted to cut the interest rate to 3.4 percent under the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007.

The Stop the Student Loan Interest Rate Hike Act will maintain the interest rate at 3.4 percent for another year. The 1-year extension is fully paid for by eliminating a tax loophole that has allowed some shareholder-employees of so-called S corporations to avoid paying their fair share of Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes. This offset will apply only to a subset of S corporations that are professional service

businesses—those that derive 75 percent of their gross income from the services of three or fewer shareholders or where the S corporation is a partner in a partnership whose primary activity is professional services. Additionally, the offset only impacts filers with income over \$250,000, filing jointly, or \$200,000, single filer.

The nonpartisan Government Accountability Office, GAO, found that in the 2003 and 2004 tax years, individuals used S corporations to underreport over \$23 billion in wage income. The median misreported amount was \$20,127.

Closing this loophole will fully offset the \$6 billion cost of a 1-year extension of the interest rate and would make the Tax Code more fair. It is a win-win proposition.

Some may say that the Federal Government cannot afford to forgo the higher interest payments because of the budget deficit. However, this legislation is fully paid for and should garner support from both sides of the aisle.

It is a matter of priorities. We need to put the interests of middle-class Americans ahead of those who would avoid paying their fair share in taxes.

Student loan debt affects millions of Americans. Two-thirds of the class of 2010 graduated owing student loans, with an average debt of over \$25,000. Student loan debt has passed the \$1 trillion mark—exceeding credit card debt. Moreover, the students and families we are trying to help with the Stop the Student Loan Interest Rate Hike have demonstrated economic need. Indeed, nearly 60 percent of the dependent students who qualify for subsidized loans come from families with incomes of less than \$60,000.

The question before us is, Will we make the student loan debt burden worse by allowing interest rates to double or will we take action to protect low and moderate income students?

We need to act fast. July 1 is only 66 days away. I urge all my colleagues to join with Senator SHERROD BROWN, Chairman HARKIN, and me in supporting the Stop the Student Loan Interest Rate Hike Act.

REMEMBERING ROBERT SATTER

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to the extraordinary life and immeasurable legacy of long-time Connecticut legislator and Superior Court judge, the Honorable Robert Satter, who passed away on January 16, 2012, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The symbolic meaning of this coincidence resonated with many who admired Judge Satter for his crusading work on behalf of civil rights and equal opportunity.

After serving in the Navy during World War II, Bob dedicated himself wholeheartedly to the law, first as a well-known attorney in Hartford where he took on controversial death penalty

cases. In 1959, Bob won a seat in the Connecticut Legislature, attributing his successful campaign to the path previously blazed by Democratic Governor Abraham Rubicoff. He served in the Connecticut Legislature until 1961 and then again from 1963 to 1966 where he is known for fighting for society's most marginalized. As a State legislator, he penned Connecticut's first civil rights bill that targeted discrimination in housing sales. Starting in 1966, Bob served as general counsel to the Democratic legislative majority, and was nominated to the bench in 1975 as a Connecticut State judge. Although officially retiring at the age of 70, Bob served as a senior judge and trial referee—only vacating this role when he was too ill to continue serving.

As an attorney, legislator, Superior Court Judge and then as a senior judge, Bob continually challenged himself, presiding in many difficult and controversial cases and always working to make laws to serve the people of Connecticut.

He constantly made the time to give back to future generations of lawyers, teaching courses such as Constitutional Law at Trinity College, Liberties of an American at the University of Hartford, Administrative Law at the University of Connecticut's Graduate School of Political Science, and the Development of Social Policy at Yale University. Bob is a legend at the University of Connecticut Law School, where he taught a Legislative Process course for 27 years.

Bob achieved national renown, but was also well known personally throughout his local community, participating in informal groups, including book, poker, and writing clubs. In his last column for the Connecticut Law Tribune, "The Last Word on a Long, Rich Life," Bob wrote of his appreciation for practicing law in Hartford as opposed to New York City where he started out his legal career. In the greater Hartford area, Bob wrote, "I found time to participate in the community." He created the Hartford Community Renewal Team, which was Hartford's first agency dedicated exclusively to combatting poverty, and in his last published newspaper column, he wrote that he "would drop any legal matter to come to its assistance."

This humanity is clearly evident in Bob's essays and books—true gifts to future generations. When he turned 90, he wrote in the Hartford Courant: "Internally, I am a bunch of memories of people I've known, events I've experienced, books I've read and poems I can still recite. More and more I live in that interior space, recalling the past. When I die, that presence and circuitry will vanish." Respectfully, my own view is that his memories will endure through the family and friends that adore him, his legal accomplishments will withstand time, and his "presence and circuitry" will be ever vibrant.

Although he served Connecticut for more than 5 decades, Bob's contributions were immeasurable. Connecticut has lost a great mind, teacher, and integral part of its political and progressive infrastructure. Connecticut and the Nation will never forget this great man. He lives on through his words and his tremendous acts of vision and courage as well as his passion for life, the law, and the State of Connecticut.

2012 INTEL SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I wish to acknowledge the seven Connecticut students who have been named 2012 Intel Science Talent Search semifinalists. This elite, national competition seeks to honor high school students who excel in a science or math research project in order to "highlight the need for improved math and science education in the United States." Beginning in 1942, the Society for Science and the Public, SSP, has partnered with Westinghouse and then in 1998 with the Intel Corporation to offer this opportunity for young scientists and mathematicians. These 7 students from Connecticut have been selected from over 1,500 applications from around the country, and I am proud that they represent Greenwich, Guilford, Hamden, Lakeville, Wallingford, and Woodbridge Counties. Their hard work, motivation, and curiosity gives me great pride and hope in their ability to change the world. Using their intelligence, ideas, and passion, they can help solve some of our Nation's most pressing issues.

Student Zizi Yu from Amity Regional High School observed the severe food allergies experienced by some of her peers. Through a survey and a case controlled study, she took a closer look at what has been commonly called the hygiene hypothesis, finding a correlation between the age of exposure to certain foods and substances and the prevalence of allergies later in life. After being named a semifinalist on January 25, 2012, Zizi was selected as one of 40 finalists and traveled to Washington, DC, in March to meet with national leaders to present her findings.

William Bennett Hallisey and Ryota Ishizuka took a unique, independent science research class at Greenwich High School, where they were inspired to experiment with the intersection of biology and environmental studies. After learning about research conducted at Stanford University, William adjusted the materials previously used in experimentation and examined how silver nanoparticles and felt substrates could serve as an easily transportable, low-cost, and user-friendly filtration system, removing about 95 percent of a system's bacteria. Ryota Ishizuka looked at ways to harness the potential of microbial fuel cells to generate electricity through hydrogen output. She found that she could create a fully au-

tonomous water treatment system, powering a wastewater treatment reactor, by the reactions of bacteria found in the wastewater itself.

Guilford High School's Yuning Zhang used this competition, in conjunction with work at Yale University's School of Medicine, to express his interest in biomedical research. According to his advanced placement biology teacher, Ruth Heckman, Yuning is "so excited about doing research and wants to make it his future." After isolating kidney cells, growing them in enriched cultures, and staining and characterizing them, he compared these samples to non-selectively grown cells. He found that there was an over 70 percent increase in the amount of stem cells that would grow from selectively grown cells, which has incredible future applications for injury repairing and wound healing.

Aaron Shim of Choate Rosemary Hall used computer models and an opportunity to work alongside Yale chemistry professors to study organometallic complexes and their possible applications for renewable energy. His goal was to further refine the modeling methods of these complexes in order to expedite our understanding and utilization of the way hydrogen is stored in fuel cells. Over the course of his research, Aaron was motivated by and hopes to explore in the future how computers can help "us understand a little bit more about the natural world around us, helping solve real-world problems through their rather abstract power of mathematics and computation."

Hailing from Hamden High School, Yiyuan Hu examined MyD88—a protein involved in the body's immune system—and its role in DNA damage response. Through novel research of infectious diseases as part of Dr. Albert Shaw's laboratory at Yale University's School of Medicine, Yiyuan helped discover unexpected new applications for MyD88 to counter diseases tied to chemicals that help kill bacteria but can also damage DNA. Yiyuan has even inspired other students at Hamden High School to become excited about research and involved in the school's science club.

Student Seung Hyun Lee contemplated the Steiner ratio problem as part of an independent study project in conjunction with his math instructor at his high school, the Hotchkiss School, and Hofstra University's Professor Dan Ismailescu. Seung experimented with the field of combination optimization, a study that combines math and theoretical computer science, with the aim to advance our understanding of the Steiner ratio problem.

The success of these talented young adults is a testament to the care and dedication of the teachers, mentors, and administrators who nurtured them and their projects, giving the time and space for creativity, problem-solving, and experimentation. Even though the

Intel Science Competition has strict rules about independent student work, these brilliant mentors inspire their students to spend their free time researching new ideas and thinking big thoughts.

Greenwich High School's independent science research class is taught by Andy Bramante, who left a 15-year career as a chemical engineer and chemist to inspire high school students to love research. An advanced placement biology teacher at Guilford High School and educator for 36 years, Ruth Heckman was excited to report that she gets to learn from students like Yuning Zhang. Zizi's research was guided by Deborah Day, science research teacher at Amity Regional High School. Kevin Rogers, the head of the science department and chemistry teacher at Choate Rosemary Hall, helped Aaron Shim work with an outside group at Yale University in furtherance of his research. Similarly, the instructor of mathematics at the Hotchkiss School, Marta Eso, worked with Seung Hyun Lee to complete an independent study research project at his high school and also at Hofstra University. And Sonia Beloin, teacher and adviser to the Science Bowl and Science Olympiad clubs at Hamden High School, mentored Yiyuan Hu, helping to facilitate his successful work at the Section of Infectious Diseases at Yale School of Medicine and supporting him to improve his presentation over time.

Several of these students were invited to join high-level study on their chosen topics at several select universities. Yuning Zhang, Aaron Shim, and Yiyuan Hu were invited into cutting-edge laboratories at Yale University. Yuning worked with Dr. Gilbert Moeckel, the director of the Renal Pathology and Electron Microscopy Laboratory at Yale University's School of Medicine. After reading some of their papers, Aaron was invited to join Professor Victor S. Batista's research team at Yale University's Department of Chemistry. Yiyuan Hu assisted Dr. Albert Shaw's laboratory in the Section of Infectious Diseases at the Yale School of Medicine, and Seung Hyun Lee worked in conjunction with Professor Dan Ismailescu from Hofstra University. I applaud this fruitful and nurturing relationship between high school students and universities.

I wish the best of luck to the seven Connecticut 2012 Intel Science Talent Search semifinalists as they continue to inspire others to dedicate their brilliance to STEM fields. I know my colleagues will join me in honoring these impressive accomplishments of our Nation's young people.

TRIBUTE TO SALVATORE PRINCIOTTI

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the Stamford Young Artists Philharmonic, SYAP, and most especially, Salvatore