

am a member, contains many provisions reflecting Congress's support of the Defense Department's top strategic priorities. It also reflects the challenges we may encounter while outlining ways to reduce spending, and we must reduce military spending, no question about it. But sequestration is not the way.

Also, with regard to the Defense authorization bill, I should mention this is the 51st consecutive year that Congress has passed such a bill. Again, that is testimony to bipartisanship with regard to DOD reauthorization. That is the good news. The bad news is the failure to address our past spending has compounded the situation we now face. Further delays only make the problem worse.

We know tough decisions will have to be made to fix our country's debt problem. All Federal agencies, including DOD, will have to do more with less in today's era of fiscal austerity. But the bottom line is this: We have an overriding constitutional obligation to provide for the common defense, to ensure our country is safe, and that our men and women in uniform are well equipped to face the challenges of the 21st century. I urge my colleagues to work together in a bipartisan fashion toward a solution that achieves the fiscal discipline we need without compromising the ability of our military to protect and defend America.

Addressing sequestration should be our No. 1 priority—this week. We should act before the August break. After Labor Day, after the political conventions, when campaigns are in full swing and we have only 2 months to go before these devastating cuts go into effect, do we truly believe the atmosphere will be conducive to solving sequestration? I don't think so. Is it truly in our Nation's best national security interest to address this during a lameduck session? I don't think so. We should not leave town for an August break if we have not answered this sequestration issue. The hour is upon us. I yield the floor.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). The clerk will call the roll. The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. BENNET. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. BENNET pertaining to the introduction of S. 3400 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BENNET. I yield the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Bring Jobs Home Act.

Growing up in a blue-collar neighborhood in Baltimore during World War II,

my father had a small neighborhood grocery store.

We were the neighborhood of mom-and-pop businesses and factories. We made liberty ships. We put out turbo steel to make the tanks. Glenn L. Martin made the seaplanes that helped win the battle of the Pacific. We were in the manufacturing business. But the blue-collar Baltimore of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam just isn't what it used to be.

The jobs are leaving now. Our shipyard jobs have left. Our steel mills have shrunk to miniscule levels. We don't make ships. And we don't make clothing.

Where did those jobs go?

Those jobs are on a slow boat to China. They are on a fast track to Mexico and other jobs are in dial 1-800 anywhere.

And why did they go?

In some cases, they went because of tax breaks that rewarded corporations for moving manufacturing overseas.

It is wrong to give companies incentives to send millions of jobs to other countries, especially when millions of Americans are looking for work. It is wrong to put companies that stay in America at a competitive disadvantage.

It is time we look at our Tax Code and call for a patriotic tax code.

We walk around the floor of the Senate. We go to rallies. We love to be in parades. We wear our flags because we want to stand up for our troops, and we should stand up for our troops. But we also have to stand up for America.

The current Tax Code is putting companies that stay in America at a disadvantage because they keep their business here, hire their workers at home, pay their share of taxes, and provide health care to their employees. We should be rewarding these companies with "good guy" tax breaks for hiring and building their businesses right here in the United States.

I have been on a jobs tour of Maryland. I visited bakeries, microbreweries, and factories of small machine tool companies. I visited Main Street, small streets, and rural communities.

I talked with business owners and their employees. These are "good guy" businesses. They work hard and play by the rules. They have jobs right here in the United States. They want to expand. They want to hire. They need a government on their side and at their side. They are harmed by thoughtless government tax incentives that reward competitors who move overseas.

That is why I am a proud cosponsor of the Bring Jobs Home Act. This bill ends the loophole that gives companies a tax break for sending jobs overseas.

There is a loophole in the Federal Tax Code that lets businesses deduct the "business expense" for costs of moving the company or its workers right out of the country.

This legislation tells these companies. If you want to export jobs out of America, you can't file a deduction for

doing it. And it ensures the Tax Code can't be used to boost corporate rewards at the expense of American workers.

This bill is about helping those "good guy" businesses who are creating jobs here. It says: If you bring jobs back to the United States, you can get a tax break for 20 percent of the cost of bringing the jobs home.

That is why I am proud to stand with my colleague from Michigan to call on us to think about economic patriotism, a tax code that rewards American companies that bring jobs back home, and a tax code that ends despicable tax breaks and subsidies to companies that move jobs overseas.

I call upon my colleagues to think about where America is going in the 21st century. Where are we going to be? Are we going to create more opportunity? Are we going to create more jobs that pay good wages with good benefits or are we going to resemble the economy of a third-world country?

I really want to have a tax code that brings our jobs back home, brings our money back home, and stands up for America. So let's pass the Bring Jobs Home Act and take an important step toward economic patriotism.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

#### HIGH GAS PRICES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I remain concerned about the high price of gasoline that continues to disproportionately hurt working class families, especially those in rural States like Vermont. In Vermont, the average price of gasoline remains above the national average. Despite significant efforts to improve public transportation in the State, many Vermonters must still rely on their cars as the primary mode of transportation. More can and must be done to help families who are struggling to find jobs and put food on the table.

Crude oil accounts for the largest share of the price of gasoline. I am concerned that excessive speculation in the oil market has contributed to a significant rise in the price of gasoline. Congress included important protections to address excessive speculation

in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. As a conferee and strong advocate for that law, I have pushed the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission to quickly implement the protections and rules to help curb these abuses.

At the same time, we must ensure that local and regional markets remain competitive and that oil companies do not engage in anticompetitive practices. While prices have eased somewhat nationally this summer, there have been concerns raised about price disparities in the cost of gasoline in Vermont. Vermont prices remain higher than the national average and residents of northern Vermont are paying even more than their neighbors just one or two towns to the south. I support the efforts by the State of Vermont, Senator SANDERS and Federal regulators to look into whether these differences can be explained by market conditions, and to take action if they cannot. Such serious allegations should be properly investigated by the Oil and Gas Price Fraud Working Group at the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission.

The largest oil companies raked in \$137 billion in profits last year alone, while also taking in billions in taxpayer subsidies. Repeated efforts to repeal these ridiculous subsidies by myself and a majority of the Senate have been filibustered by friends of the big oil industry. It is these large oil companies and those working at the wholesale level that are reaping tremendous profits, while many of our independent and locally owned stations are struggling to make ends meet. Regrettably, many of these same local stations are forced to shutter their doors when the large oil chains undercut their business.

The real cost of high gas prices is more than just the bill at the pump. These prices force families to choose between filling their gas tanks and putting food on the table. And they mean rising food prices due to increased shipping costs. These are costs that working families, particularly in these difficult economic times, often cannot absorb. I will continue to push for creative, long-term solutions to relieve the pain at the pump.

#### CONGRATULATING MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Massachusetts General Hospital, located in my home State of Massachusetts. Mass General has recently been named the number one hospital in America by U.S. News & World Report for their dedication and excellence in providing care to thousands of patients every year. I also want to acknowledge Brigham and Women's Hospital for being named among the top hospitals in the country.

Mass General cares for more than 47,000 inpatients each year, and serves

as the largest teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. It is also the oldest and largest hospital in New England. Located right in Boston, Mass General's 907 bed facility has a tradition of excellence. They also have four additional health centers in Charlestown, Chelsea, Revere and the North End. Together, these locations handle over one million outpatient visits, as well as over 80,000 emergency visits, each year. It is no surprise that Mass General is the top hospital in the Nation, with its impressive research program, innovative primary care, and distinguished staff.

Massachusetts is home to a number of remarkable research programs, many of which are housed within Mass General's network, which is the largest hospital-based research program in the United States. This network includes over 20 clinical departments and centers, investing \$550 million per year to work towards discoveries that transform treatments and patient care.

For example, the Global Network for Women's and Children's Health Research at Massachusetts General Hospital for Children is one of only 7 locations in the country funded by the NIH to study the rates of morbidity and mortality in women and children in developing countries. These discoveries have not only led to better treatments for children, but have also led to policy changes at the World Health Organization—WHO—to better address international health for women and children.

Mass General has also made important strides in primary care, especially for our State's seniors. The Mass General Geriatric Medicine Unit is rated one of the top departments in the nation for geriatric care, due to their diverse staff of specialists, including those in geriatric medicine, geriatric psychiatry, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric nursing, and social work, who focus on both the patient's physical and mental wellbeing.

Mass General is changing the way that we look at patient primary care. You may be familiar with Patient Centered Medical Homes, which focus on patient care and health in a very personalized and coordinated way. Mass General Senior Health is a recognized Level 3 Patient Centered Medical Home, which is setting the standard for the industry. I recently visited Mass General, and I am continually impressed by their coordination to bring together multiple doctors and services to ensure the highest quality of care for Massachusetts residents.

I would also like to recognize the Mass General nursing staff, as the hospital is a designated Magnet hospital. This is the highest honor in nursing excellence that is awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, and recognizes Mass General's excellence and innovations in their nursing practice.

Finally, Mass General's Home Base Program has partnered with the Bos-

ton Red Sox Foundation to raise awareness about post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries among our returning veterans. I am encouraged by their work to develop new treatments for these injuries, as well as their efforts to educate our community. Roughly 50,000 veterans returning from Iraq or Afghanistan are affected by these injuries, and the Home Base Program is making great strides in supporting these wounded warriors.

In closing, I congratulate Mass General Hospital for achieving the number one hospital ranking in the country. I know that the people of Massachusetts are extremely proud of this accomplishment.

#### TRIBUTE TO COMMANDER WILLIAM MOELLER

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the tremendous lifetime of service by one of our Nation's most courageous heroes, CDR William Moeller. Commander Moeller has served for 22 years in the Coast Guard in four location assignments, dedicating his time, energy, and even risking his life for his fellow seamen and women, the U.S. Coast Guard, and his country. On September 1, 2012, he will retire from the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve.

Upon graduation from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 1990 with a B.S. in government, Commander Moeller began his career and his sea tour as a deck watch officer aboard the USCGC *Tamara*. He soon rose to first lieutenant and in this capacity led the rescue of four members of the Air National Guard in October 1991. This rescue among monstrous waves, churned by the worst storm off the Eastern seaboard in 100 years, captured the Nation's imagination in the book and later the film adaptation of "The Perfect Storm."

Following his commission as group captain, he transferred to reserve status at the Port Long Island Sound in New Haven. Promoted to lieutenant commander in the Marine Safety Office located in Portland, ME, he served in the Coast Guard Reserve until recalled to active duty during 9/11. Returning to reserve status and to the Sector Long Island Sound, he was promoted to commander in 2006. After a few years at Activities New York, he returned to New Haven in 2010 for the last time as reserve logistics section chief. Commander Moeller's dedicated protection of the Nation, most of which took place at the Long Island Sound—waters significant to Connecticut and the Eastern seaboard—is appreciated by millions.

In addition to receiving extensive military recognition—including the Coast Guard Medal for Extraordinary Heroism, the Coast Guard Commendation Medal, and the Air Force Commendation Medal—Commander Moeller has been awarded the Coast Guard Medal by President George W. Bush. In