

rights of all people, will keep the pressure on a Syrian regime that has murdered its own people, and support opposition leaders that respect the rights of every Syrian. And we will stand steadfast with Israel in pursuit of security and a lasting peace. These are the messages I will deliver when I travel to the Middle East next month.

All this work depends on the courage and sacrifice of those who serve in dangerous places at great personal risk—our diplomats, our intelligence officers, and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. As long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will do whatever we must to protect those who serve their country abroad, and we will maintain the best military in the world. We will invest in new capabilities, even as we reduce waste and wartime spending. We will ensure equal treatment for all service members, and equal benefits for their families—gay and straight. We will draw upon the courage and skills of our sisters and daughters, because women have proven under fire that they are ready for combat. We will keep faith with our veterans—investing in world-class care, including mental health care, for our wounded warriors; supporting our military families; and giving our veterans the benefits, education, and job opportunities they have earned. And I want to thank my wife Michelle and Dr. Jill Biden for their continued dedication to serving our military families as well as they serve us.

But defending our freedom is not the job of our military alone. We must all do our part to make sure our God-given rights are protected here at home. That includes our most fundamental right as citizens: the right to vote. When any Americans—no matter where they live or what their party—are denied that right simply because they can't wait for five, six, or seven hours just to cast their ballot, we are betraying our ideals. That's why, tonight, I'm announcing a non-partisan commission to improve the voting experience in America. And I'm asking two long-time experts in the field, who've recently served as the top attorneys for my campaign and for Governor Romney's campaign, to lead it. We can fix this, and we will. The American people demand it. And so does our democracy.

Of course, what I've said tonight matters little if we don't come together to protect our most precious resource—our children.

It has been two months since Newtown. I know this is not the first time this country has debated how to reduce gun violence. But this time is different. Overwhelming majorities of Americans—Americans who believe in the 2nd Amendment—have come together around commonsense reform—like background checks that will make it harder for criminals to get their hands on a gun. Senators of both parties are working together on tough new laws to prevent anyone from buying guns for resale to criminals. Police chiefs are

asking our help to get weapons of war and massive ammunition magazines off our streets, because they are tired of being outgunned.

Each of these proposals deserves a vote in Congress. If you want to vote no, that's your choice. But these proposals deserve a vote. Because in the two months since Newtown, more than a thousand birthdays, graduations, and anniversaries have been stolen from our lives by a bullet from a gun.

One of those we lost was a young girl named Hadiya Pendleton. She was 15 years old. She loved Fig Newtons and lip gloss. She was a majorette. She was so good to her friends, they all thought they were her best friend. Just three weeks ago, she was here, in Washington, with her classmates, performing for her country at my inauguration. And a week later, she was shot and killed in a Chicago park after school, just a mile away from my house.

Hadiya's parents, Nate and Cleo, are in this chamber tonight, along with more than two dozen Americans whose lives have been torn apart by gun violence. They deserve a vote.

Gabby Giffords deserves a vote.

The families of Newtown deserve a vote.

The families of Aurora deserve a vote.

The families of Oak Creek, and Tucson, and Blacksburg, and the countless other communities ripped open by gun violence—they deserve a simple vote.

Our actions will not prevent every senseless act of violence in this country. Indeed, no laws, no initiatives, no administrative acts will perfectly solve all the challenges I've outlined tonight. But we were never sent here to be perfect. We were sent here to make what difference we can, to secure this Nation, expand opportunity, and uphold our ideals through the hard, often frustrating, but absolutely necessary work of self-government.

We were sent here to look out for our fellow Americans the same way they look out for one another, every single day, usually without fanfare, all across this country. We should follow their example.

We should follow the example of a New York City nurse named Menchu Sanchez. When Hurricane Sandy plunged her hospital into darkness, her thoughts were not with how her own home was faring—they were with the twenty precious newborns in her care and the rescue plan she devised that kept them all safe.

We should follow the example of a North Miami woman named Desiline Victor. When she arrived at her polling place, she was told the wait to vote might be six hours. And as time ticked by, her concern was not with her tired body or aching feet, but whether folks like her would get to have their say. Hour after hour, a throng of people stayed in line in support of her. Because Desiline is 102 years old. And they erupted in cheers when she finally put on a sticker that read "I Voted."

We should follow the example of a police officer named Brian Murphy. When a gunman opened fire on a Sikh temple in Wisconsin, and Brian was the first to arrive, he did not consider his own safety. He fought back until help arrived and ordered his fellow officers to protect the safety of the Americans worshipping inside—even as he lay bleeding from twelve bullet wounds.

When asked how he did that, Brian said, "That's just the way we're made."

That's just the way we're made.

We may do different jobs, and wear different uniforms, and hold different views than the person beside us. But as Americans, we all share the same proud title:

We are citizens. It's a word that doesn't just describe our nationality or legal status. It describes the way we're made. It describes what we believe. It captures the enduring idea that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations; that our rights are wrapped up in the rights of others; and that well into our third century as a Nation, it remains the task of us all, as citizens of these United States, to be the authors of the next great chapter in our American story.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 12, 2013.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-331. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Agency's proposed fiscal year 2014 budget; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-332. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Hexythiazox; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9376-9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-333. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Glycine max Herbicide-resistant Acetolactate Synthase; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9376-4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-334. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Thiacloprid; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9374-9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-335. A communication from the Acting Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal

and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Texas (Splenic) Fever in Cattle" (Docket No. APHIS-2012-0069) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-336. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Fresh Bananas From the Philippines into the Continental United States" ((RIN0579-AD61) (Docket No. APHIS-2011-0028)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-337. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Criteria Used to Order Administrative Detention of Food for Human or Animal Consumption" ((RIN0910-AG67) (Docket No. FDA-2011-N-0197)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-338. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-339. A joint communication from the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to maintaining the EP-3E Airborne Reconnaissance Integrated Electronic System II and the Special Projects Aircraft platform in a manner that meets the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements of the Commanders of the Combatant Commands; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-340. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Michael D. Barbero, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-341. A communication from the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-342. A communication from the General Counsel of the National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Designation of Low-Income Status; Acceptance of Secondary Capital Accounts by Low-Income Designated Credit Unions" (RIN3133-AE09) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-343. A communication from the Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC-344. A communication from the Director of Insular Affairs, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, trans-

mitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "First Five-Year Review of the Compact of Free Association, As Amended, Between the Governments of the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-345. A communication from the Director of Insular Affairs, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "First Five-Year Review of the Compact of Free Association, As Amended, Between the Governments of the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-346. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Annual Charges for Use of Government Lands" (Docket No. RM11-6-000) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-347. A communication from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Montana Regulatory Program" (Docket No. MT-032-FOR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-348. A communication from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Utah Regulatory Program" (Docket No. UT-047-FOR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-349. A communication from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tennessee Abandoned Mine Land Program" (Docket No. TN-001-FOR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-350. A communication from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Wyoming Regulatory Program" (Docket No. WY-040-FOR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-351. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Amendments to Maryland's Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9777-2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-352. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New Jersey and New York Ozone Attainment Demonstrations" (FRL No. 9778-5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-353. A communication from the Chair of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment Access

Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Overview of Medicaid and CHIP"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-354. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Recovery Auditing in the Medicare and Medicaid Program"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-355. A joint communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-356. A communication from the Program Manager, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Programs; Transparency Reports and Reporting of Physician Ownership or Investment Interests" (RIN0938-AR33) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-357. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates" (Notice 2013-6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-358. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reconsideration of Tax-Exempt AFR" (Notice 2013-4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-359. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Noncompensatory Partnership Options" ((RIN1545-BA53) (TD 9612)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-360. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13-016, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-361. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13-002, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-362. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of State, Legislative Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-363. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of State, Legislative Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report

relative to Technical Collection for the New START Treaty (OSS-2013-0163); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-364. A communication from the Program Manager, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Foreign Quarantine; Import Regulations for Infectious Biological Agents, Infectious Substances, and Vectors" (RIN0920-AA37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-365. A communication from the Program Manager, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of User Fees for Filovirus Testing of Nonhuman Primate Liver Samples" (RIN0920-AA47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-366. A communication from the Director of the Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, Mine Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pattern of Violations" (RIN1219-AB73) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 1, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-367. A communication from the Director of the Regulations, Legislation, and Interpretation Division, Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "The Family and Medical Leave Act" (RIN1215-AB76, RIN1235-AA03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-368. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Federal Agency Drug-Free Workplace Programs"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-369. A communication from the Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Managing Public Employees in the Public Interest: Employee Perspectives on Merit Principles in Federal Workplaces"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-370. A communication from the Secretary of the Army, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to reservations made for internment at Arlington National Cemetery; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-371. communication from the Director of the Regulation Policy and Management Office of the General Counsel, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Disclosures to Participate in State Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs" (RIN2900-AO45) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2013; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. LEVIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Charles Timothy Hagel, of Nebraska, to be Secretary of Defense.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 280. A bill to ensure effective control over the Congressional budget process; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 281. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to restore integrity to and strengthen payment limitation rules for commodity payments and benefits; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 282. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a new counseling program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 283. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to invest in innovation for education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 284. A bill to transfer certain facilities, easements, and rights-of-way to Fort Sumner Irrigation District, New Mexico; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 285. A bill to designate the Valles Caldera National Preserve as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 286. A bill to enhance civil penalties under the Federal securities laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 287. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the definition of homeless veteran for purposes of benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 288. A bill to increase the participation of historically underrepresented demographic groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and industry; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 289. A bill to extend the low-interest refinancing provisions under the Local Development Business Loan Program of the Small

Business Administration; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. REID:

S. Res. 29. A resolution to constitute the majority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. ENZI):

S. Res. 30. A resolution establishing the Committee to Reduce Government Waste; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 22

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. COWAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 22, a bill to establish background check procedures for gun shows.

S. 33

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. COWAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 33, a bill to prohibit the transfer or possession of large capacity ammunition feeding devices, and for other purposes.

S. 34

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. COWAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 34, a bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms or the issuance of firearms and explosives licenses to known or suspected dangerous terrorists.

S. 58

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 58, a bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to ensure that voters in elections for Federal office do not wait in long lines in order to vote.

S. 84

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. COWAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 84, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 91

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 91, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify eligibility for the child tax credit.

S. 119

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from California