

Mayorkas nomination, the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for debate only, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, there will be two rollcall votes tonight at 11:15 p.m. on the motion to concur in the House message to accompany H.R. 3304, the National Defense Authorization Act, and cloture on the Mayorkas nomination. If cloture is invoked there will be a series of six rollcall votes tomorrow beginning at about 10 a.m.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 10 p.m. and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

FIRST SESSION OF THE 113TH CONGRESS REFLECTIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the first session of the 113th Congress comes to a close, it is appropriate to reflect on some of the accomplishments of the year, while acknowledging that so much more could have been done had Republicans in both the Senate and the House cooperated. We have passed some commonsense, good-government legislation. As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am proud of the work of the Senate Judiciary Committee this year. While there remains much work to be done, these accomplishments illustrate what we as a Congress are capable of when we set aside partisan politics and put the good of the American people first.

My first legislative priority at the beginning of this Congress was to complete our work to improve and reinvigorate the Violence Against Women Act, VAWA. Vermont has been a national leader in addressing domestic and sexual violence. In Vermont, VAWA funding has helped the National Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence provide services for more than 7,000 adults and nearly 1,400 children in 2011 alone. The Burlington-based Women Helping Battered Women and Middlebury-based WomenSafe have supported thousands of children and adults by offering emergency shelter, transitional housing, counseling, and legal assistance. These dedicated service providers help victims recover from unspeakable trauma and abuse, but the need for VAWA remains. Three women are killed every day by abusive husbands or boyfriends. In Vermont, 51 percent of all homicides are related to domestic violence. After months of work, the Senate came together in the best tradition of the institution to re-

authorize VAWA with a strong bipartisan vote. This bill, which I drafted with Senator MIKE CRAPO, a conservative Republican from Idaho, proved that when we put people before politics there is much we can accomplish. Our bill was written with the input of survivors and the advocates who work with them every day, law enforcement personnel, judges, and State and local leaders. It was drafted to meet the real needs of real victims. Although it faced early resistance, none of the commonsense changes it included should have been controversial. Eventually, the House listened to the experts in the field and followed the Senate's example and passed this inclusive, lifesaving legislation. At a time when we face gridlock and stonewalling on even the most compelling issues, I was heartened to see that we could find a way to cut through all of that to help victims of violence.

I am proud of this new law. As a result of its passage, for the first time, VAWA guarantees that all victims can receive needed services, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act strengthens protections for vulnerable immigrant victims. It ensures that colleges and universities will do more to protect students from domestic and sexual violence. Our reauthorization also took important new steps to combat the appalling epidemic of domestic violence on tribal lands and to ensure that no perpetrators of this terrible crime are above the law. I was happy to work with Representative TOM COLE, a Republican from Oklahoma, to preserve this provision in our bill. I thank him for his leadership.

To help support the important work of Vermont's domestic and sexual violence advocates, I included all-State minimum funding allocations in the VAWA reauthorization, and amended the definition of rural State to ensure that Vermont continues to be eligible for grants under the Rural Grant Program, despite the increased population in Chittenden County. So far in 2013, Vermont has received \$4.5 million in VAWA grants for victim services and violence prevention.

The bill that the President signed also included the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, TVPRA, which strengthens effective programs to help us take on the scourge of human trafficking, both here at home and around the world. It is unacceptable that 150 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, the evils of sex trafficking and labor trafficking, forms of modern-day slavery, still exist. It has been needlessly difficult, but I am glad that the Senate adopted my amendment to add the Trafficking Victims Protection Act to our Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act to address the horrors of human trafficking.

My work across party lines did not end with passage of VAWA and

TVPRA. It continued on a number of other smaller, yet nonetheless important, pieces of legislation.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on State Department and Foreign Operations, I worked with Senators SHAHEEN and MCCAIN to obtain a continuation of the Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa, SIV, Program, H.R. 3233. Congress created the program in 2008 to afford some of the tens of thousands of Iraqis who served alongside U.S. troops the opportunity to seek safety and a new beginning in the United States. It was set to expire at the end of October despite the fact that after 5 years fewer than 6,000 of the 25,000 available visas had been distributed to those Iraqis who risked their lives to be our translators and our guides. They were a critical resource to our troops, helping them navigate complex cultural, political, and geographic terrain. Letting the program expire would have meant leaving many well-deserving Iraqi allies in danger and undermining American credibility for decades to come.

Although our initial efforts this fall to include the extension in the continuing resolution were blocked, we were able to work together to honor our commitment and renew this critical program by passing bipartisan legislation at the final hour. Among the many lessons of the Vietnam War is that we must not abandon those who risked their lives to help us.

Over the summer, I also worked with Representatives KLINE and MILLER on the House Education and Workforce Committee, and with Ranking Member GRASSLEY to pass the Missing Children's Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2013, H.R. 3092. This important measure ensures that the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, NCMEC, can continue its critical and lifesaving work on behalf of some of the most vulnerable children in our communities. Congress has now renewed its obligation to support vital efforts to locate missing children and to protect all children from being victimized by predators.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children was first launched nearly three decades ago. In that time, NCMEC has helped law enforcement in the recovery of more than 188,000 missing children through the use of a 24-hour hotline, a national child pornography tipline, and a cyber tipline, as well as the circulation of millions of photographs used to help track and identify missing children. The bill passed by Congress in September extends the program another five years.

The U.S. Parole Commission is an important public safety entity responsible for granting or denying parole for Federal and District of Columbia prisoners sentenced before parole was abolished. It also has jurisdiction over more recent DC offenders who are on supervised release from prison. The Commission's charter was set to expire

in October, and what should have been a straightforward and noncontroversial extension, turned into a drawn-out struggle to override the objections of a single Republican Senator. Those objections meant that passage was only secured on the eve of the Commission's expiration, unnecessarily placing public safety at risk.

The objection was particularly troubling given that Congress has consistently recognized the importance of the Commission, reauthorizing it on six prior occasions. Beginning in August, I worked closely with members of the House Judiciary Committee to find bipartisan, bicameral agreement. They understood the urgency and consequences of inaction and passed the U.S. Parole Commission Extension Act of 2013 in September, H.R. 3190. Unfortunately, that same sense of urgency was not felt in the Senate and opposition delayed passage until the final deadline. Although reason ultimately prevailed, unnecessary partisan opposition cost us time and threatened public safety. It is not the way to legislate.

I also worked to clear a straightforward extension of the Supreme Court Police's authority to protect Justices, their staff, and official guests when they are away from Supreme Court grounds, H.R. 2922. I worked with my counterparts in the House for months to move this extension. Last month, the House voted by an overwhelming majority of 399 to 3 to pass this bipartisan bill, which extends this important authority through 2019. Congress has provided this authority since the 1980s to ensure the continued safety of our Supreme Court Justices and their employees. Threats to the safety of Supreme Court Justices are a threat to our democracy. In light of recent attacks on Justices off the grounds of the Supreme Court, it was all the more imperative that we pass this extension without delay.

Most recently, I worked with Senators MORAN and KING to move forward the Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act. This legislation, which will enable veterinarians to cross State lines to treat animals, particularly livestock, when the need arises, will dramatically improve the ability of veterinarians to do their jobs effectively. I have heard from many Vermonters about just how important this legislation is to them. The bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee, and in my role as chairman, I moved to discharge it from committee so that it could progress to the full Senate as quickly as possible. I am optimistic that it will pass the full Senate yet this year.

Unfortunately, the passage and enactment of bipartisan legislation has become more the exception than the rule. If this unprecedented obstruction continues, we will end up passing 46 percent fewer laws than we did last year. That is 46 percent less progress made for the American people and the Nation. It is therefore not surprising that the American public holds the Congress in such low esteem.

As the elected representatives of the American people, we bear a special responsibility to find ways to work together to find real solutions to our Nation's problems. Yet Congress is gripped by the paralysis of partisan politics. We are not the first Congress to face a divided government where Republicans control one House and Democrats the other. For example, during the 99th Congress, when the Republicans controlled the Senate and the Democrats the House, Congress passed 687 bills, which were enacted into law. It is disappointing how our progress pales in comparison. To match that level of productivity this Congress, we would have to pass over 600 bills next year. If we stay on track, we will have accomplished 81 percent less legislatively than the divided 99th Congress. To be clear, we have passed into law 19 percent of what the 99th Congress was able to pass. That is not a shining record of accomplishment, and we can and should do better.

It is my hope that both parties can set aside petty politics and get down to business for the American people. We do not agree on everything, but just as the Senate found common ground earlier this year on historic legislation to reform our broken immigration system, we must find a way to work together. The status quo is unacceptable and serves a small and extreme minority, not the common interests of a majority of Americans. Let's make the sacrifices and compromises necessary to push forward legislation that improves our economy and the lives of our constituents.

Look no further for such an opportunity than the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, a bill a bipartisan group of Senators supported and that the House has failed to consider.

This comprehensive bill contains measures that are important to many Vermonters and to the Nation. I added a provision that takes an important step toward restoring privacy rights to millions of people who live near the northern border by injecting some oversight into the decisionmaking process for operating Federal checkpoints and entering private land without a warrant far from the border. The bill contains significant measures to assist dairy farmers and other Vermont growers who have long relied on foreign workers and who will need them in the future. It contains a youth jobs program proposed by Senator SANDERS to help young people gain employment. It contains a measure I proposed to make sure that no Canadian citizen traveling to Vermont to see a family member will be charged a fee for crossing our shared border. It contains an improvement to the visas used by non-profit arts organizations like the Vermont Symphony Orchestra who invite talented foreign artists to perform in America. It contains measures to improve the lives and futures of refugees and asylum seekers who call

Vermont home. It contains improvements to the H-2B Program to help small businesses. And it contains a measure to ensure that the job-creating EB-5 Program will be made permanent so that the State of Vermont can continue the great work that is being done with it to improve Vermont communities. This is a bill that will help Vermont families and businesses alike.

The immigration reform legislation was cosponsored by four Senate Republicans and marked the first time in 7 years that the Senate was able to pass a bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill. There are some provisions in this bill I am not comfortable with, and there are provisions that I believe are noticeably absent. However, we came together as a Chamber to pass the best possible bill in the spirit of compromise and an effort to make lasting, positive change. Unfortunately that progress was stalled by the House Republican leadership, which has inexplicably vowed not to allow a vote on the Senate's bipartisan legislation.

When the Speaker of the House says as he did last week that the Senate should pass more bills, I respond by challenging the leadership of the House of Representatives to take up bipartisan Senate-passed bills. The list of such bills that have been stalled by the obstructionism of House Republicans continues to grow.

Senator GRASSLEY and I worked hard as chair and ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee to draft a bipartisan bill to protect whistleblowers. This legislation, which is identical to our legislation from last Congress, will provide important protections to employees who come forward and disclose to law enforcement price fixing and other criminal antitrust behavior that harm consumers. This legislation is a continuation of the long partnership that I have had with Senator GRASSLEY on whistleblower issues.

Congress should encourage employees with information about criminal antitrust activity, such as price fixing, to report that information by offering meaningful protection to those who blow the whistle rather than leaving them vulnerable to reprisals. Throughout our history, whistleblowers have been instrumental in alerting the public, Congress, and law enforcement to wrongdoing in a variety of areas. These individuals take risks in stepping forward, and many times their actions result in important reforms and have even saved lives.

The legislation is based on recommendations from the Government Accountability Office, which interviewed key stakeholders in the antitrust community and found widespread support for antiretaliation protection in criminal antitrust cases. The provisions in this bill are modeled on the whistleblower protections that Senator GRASSLEY and I authored as part of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and are narrowly tailored to ensure that whistleblowers

are not provided with an economic incentive to bring forth false claims.

Antitrust laws protect consumers and serve to promote our free enterprise system. Our bipartisan bill will help to ensure that criminal violations of these laws do not go unreported. I urge the House to act quickly to pass this important bipartisan legislation.

Last month, the Senate passed the bipartisan Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013. That vote was 20 years in the making, and it was long overdue for Congress to extend these protections to all American workers. Years from now we will look back on this remedy as another historic milestone on our Nation's path toward more perfect union—a quest to realize more completely the motto engraved in Vermont marble above the Supreme Court building that declares “Equal Justice Under Law.”

All Americans deserve civil rights protections under our Constitution, which, in addition to the First Amendment, also ensure due process and equal protection. In previous legislative debates like the one before us today, Congress has protected and bolstered these rights by passing legislation to fill gaps in our Federal laws. This includes passing legislation to protect the practice of religion without discrimination, to prevent pay discrimination based on sex, and to serve openly in the military. By passing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, the Senate took another significant step forward in removing discrimination from our laws and ensuring the equal treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans. I urge the House to advance this remedy to injustice, which is already the law in 29 States.

Similarly, I urge all Senators to allow passage of several common sense bills that were reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee and which enjoy strong bipartisan support but remain stalled due to the ideological objections of one or two Senators.

For example, this is now the second time in two Congresses that the Judiciary Committee has reported the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act reauthorization with strong bipartisan support. In the 111th Congress, we held a hearing to examine a series of recommendations from the Government Accountability Office. I worked with Senator GRASSLEY to incorporate many of those recommendations into the reauthorization. Yet our progress is needlessly stalled.

Statistics show that the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program has been saving lives for years. The Judiciary Committee most recently reported this legislation on a bipartisan vote in August, and it has since been approved by all Democratic Senators but remains stalled on the Republican side. Over 15 years ago, I worked with Senator Ben Nighthorse-Campbell to create this partnership to support State and local law enforcement jurisdictions in the

purchase of lifesaving bulletproof vests. Since that time, over 13,000 jurisdictions have participated in this program and more than 1,084,081 vests have been distributed to law enforcement because of this partnership.

Last year, Chief Michael Schirling of the Burlington Police Department in Vermont testified before the Judiciary Committee on the importance of the bulletproof vest partnership to law enforcement in Vermont and across the country. This year alone, 31 Vermont jurisdictions received a total over \$73,000 to aid in the procurement of 271 bulletproof vests. That is 271 more Vermont law enforcement officers who will have a better chance of survival if they are shot in the line of duty.

A few of my friends on the other side of the aisle argue that it is not the place or function of the Federal Government to spend Federal dollars on first responders in communities across the country. I urge them to put the safety of our most dedicated law enforcement officers and first responders over politics and ideology. Law enforcement officers risk their lives every day to ensure our safety, and I believe it is our duty to support them. Based on data collected by the Department of Justice, in just 2012, bulletproof vests saved the lives of at least 33 law enforcement officers in 20 States, which is an increase of almost 14 percent over 2011 levels.

The obstruction of this program's reauthorization should end. I hope those who are determined to continue their opposition will explain those objections to law enforcement officers across the country who put their lives at risk day in and day out. Congress has consistently pursued policies that support our State and local law enforcement officers and first responders. They are the frontlines of our national defense and indispensable to their communities. I urge all Senators to stand with America's law enforcement officers and support this legislation.

In April, the Judiciary Committee favorably reported bipartisan legislation that I authored with Republican Senator MIKE LEE to update ECPA and to bring this law fully into the digital age. Our bipartisan bill updates ECPA to require that the government obtain a search warrant—based upon probable cause—before obtaining the content of our emails and other electronic communications. The commonsense reforms in our bill carefully balance the interests and needs of consumers, the law enforcement community, and our Nation's thriving technology sector. The bill enjoys the support of a diverse coalition of more than 100 privacy, civil liberties, civil rights, and technology organizations from across the political spectrum, including the American-Civil Liberties Union, the Heritage Foundation, the Center for Democracy and Technology and Americans for Tax Reform. The bill is also the product of careful consultation with many Government and private

sector stakeholders, including the Departments of Justice, Commerce, and State, local law enforcement, and members of the technology and privacy communities. I remain disappointed that a single Republican Senator has objected to the unanimous consent request to pass this bipartisan bill, which overwhelmingly passed the Judiciary Committee.

The privacy reforms in this bill are too important to delay. Like Senator LEE and me, all of the bill's supporters understand that protecting our digital privacy rights is not a democratic ideal, nor a Republican ideal, but an American ideal that all of us should embrace. I hope that all Senators will join me in supporting the Electronic Communications Privacy Act Amendments Act and that the Senate will pass this bill without delay.

Earlier this year, during consideration of legislation to prevent gun violence, the committee passed a bipartisan bill to help curb the straw purchasing of firearms and the interstate trafficking of firearms. Senator COLLINS, who shares my goal of giving law enforcement officials better tools to combat the straw purchasing and firearms trafficking that puts guns into the hands of drug cartels and other criminals, joined me in this effort.

There is no doubt that straw purchasing and gun trafficking contributes significantly to the proliferation of guns in our communities across America and also across the southern border in Mexico. Under current law, there is no criminal statute specifically prohibiting straw purchasing. To convict criminals, prosecutors must rely on laws that prohibit an individual from making false statements in connection with the purchase of a firearm. The penalties for such “paperwork violations” are often too low or do not serve as effective tools for law enforcement to put criminals behind bars. My bill would have changed that.

This bill would have established a new Federal criminal offense for straw purchasing or conspiring to straw purchase a firearm from another person. My legislation would have also criminalized smuggling firearms out of the United States and also would strengthen existing law regarding the transfer of firearms to prohibited persons. This legislation was strongly supported by law enforcement groups from across the country. I was greatly disappointed when this legislation did not receive the votes to pass the Senate, including from a Senator who had voted in favor of it in the Committee. Despite the best efforts by Senator COLLINS and me to find consensus with stakeholders and senators, too few Republicans were willing to join our important effort to meaningfully combat the serious public safety risks that straw purchasing and firearms trafficking pose.

The committee also passed several bills to prevent gun violence and protect law enforcement officers, including Senator BOXER's bipartisan School

and Campus Safety Enhancements Act of 2013, Senator FRANKEN's bipartisan Justice and Mental Health Collaboration, and Senator CARDIN's bipartisan National Blue Alert Act. Each of these bills was carefully crafted and enjoy bipartisan support. I urge the Senate to consider these important legislative proposals early in the next session.

In early November, the Judiciary Committee reported by an overwhelming bipartisan majority the Leahy-Cornyn Justice for All Reauthorization Act which would reauthorize legislation first passed in 2004, when the House and Senate had Republican majorities, and it was signed into law by President George W. Bush. The Justice for All Reauthorization Act strengthens and reauthorizes key programs to make the criminal justice system work better and more fairly. And it does so in a fiscally responsible way, reducing overall authorizations by nearly 25 percent. This is a strong example of what we can accomplish when we work together.

Whether it is on the complex issues of protecting victims of domestic violence or in crafting a comprehensive immigration reform bill, we have demonstrated that we can work across the aisle to develop and pass practical legislative solutions. Just recently, in fact, we saw similar progress made by Senator MURRAY and Congressman RYAN as they put aside their considerably different views to formulate a budget deal. Likewise, the House and Senate are in the process of conferring a farm bill that we hope will be satisfactory to all parties. I hope that we can continue this trend of bipartisan cooperation as we consider legislation in the coming year, as there are tremendously important bills to be considered.

For example, the Committee will continue its work on surveillance oversight and reform. For decades I have consistently fought to curtail the sweeping powers contained in the USA PATRIOT Act and FISA Amendments Act, while also bolstering privacy protections and strengthening oversight. With the recent revelations of sweeping government surveillance programs that threaten personal privacy and threaten the economic health of American technology companies, we are at a watershed moment in this important debate. That is why I joined with Congressman SENSENBRENNER in October to introduce the USA FREEDOM Act, a bill to end the dragnet collection of Americans' phone records and recalibrate the government's surveillance authorities. All three branches of government have now called into serious question the effectiveness of these authorities. I will continue pressing the administration to rein in these powers and work with Democrats and Republicans to pass the meaningful reforms that are in the USA FREEDOM Act.

Regarding the problem of patent trolls, we have significant work to do on several issues under the Judiciary

Committee's jurisdiction. It is my hope that we will be able to work in a bipartisan way to address issues like abusive conduct by patent trolls who are targeting small businesses. I have heard from a growing number of main street businesses in Vermont and across the country that have received aggressive demand letters and been threatened with lawsuits when they are simply the innocent user of an allegedly infringing product. I have introduced bipartisan legislation with Senator LEE to tackle this problem, and I look forward to the Judiciary Committee's continued focus on this important issue next year.

In the wake of this past June's Supreme Court decision striking down the coverage formula for Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, I have been working with Congressman SENSENBRENNER and other House Democrats to introduce a bipartisan and bicameral response to the Court's ruling and to restore this vital protection to the Voting Rights Act, and will continue to push for this legislation next year.

Finally, I will remain focused on a number of important criminal justice issues, with sentencing reform legislation as a top priority. As a former prosecutor, I understand that criminals must be held accountable, and that long sentences are sometimes necessary to keep violent criminals off the street and deter those who would commit violent crime. I have come to believe, however, that mandatory minimum sentences do more harm than good. I chaired a hearing on reevaluating the effectiveness of federal mandatory minimum sentences on September 18, 2013, and have been working with both Democrats and Republicans on sentencing reform proposals.

In the coming year, I also plan to reintroduce my forensics reform bill, and will also take up the Second Chance Reauthorization Act, which I was proud to reintroduce earlier this year along with Senator PORTMAN. Since its enactment in 2008, the Second Chance Act has reduced prison costs and improved public safety by giving Federal, State, and local governments additional tools to help inmates more successfully reintegrate into their communities upon release and avoid re-offending. Offenders can escape the cycle of recidivism when they have the job training and skills necessary to successfully reenter society. So far in 2013, the Vermont Department of Corrections has received over \$800,000 to implement a two-phase adult reentry demonstration program and a comprehensive statewide adult recidivism reeducation planning program. The reauthorization bill improves and consolidates the programs authorized by the Second Chance Act and reauthorizes the bill through 2018. The reauthorization bill improves and consolidates the programs authorized by the Second Chance Act, and reauthorizes the bill through 2018.

There are far too many young Vermonters who do not have a roof

over their head each night. While organizations like the Spectrum Youth and Family Services and the Vermont Coalition for Runaway and Homeless Youth do their best to provide emergency shelter, services, and housing for youth who are homeless or marginally housed, the need far outweighs their capacity. Next year I plan to introduce legislation to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, RHYA, which expired at the end of September. RHYA funds outreach services and helps provide shelter for children and young adults who find themselves homeless. I look forward to reauthorizing and improving vital RHYA grant programs to help children in our most vulnerable communities. This reauthorization will also bolster training and resources to ensure our grantees are well equipped to meet the needs of young victims.

In addition to our legislative work, the Judiciary Committee will also continue its work to consider judicial and executive nominations. During this past year, unfortunately, the same obstruction that plagued the Senate during the first-term of the Obama administration continued to delay the rate of confirmations to appointments on the Federal bench and the Executive Branch.

The 113th Congress began with a high level of vacancies on the Federal judiciary. As of January 2013, there were 77 vacancies in the Federal judiciary, and of these, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts determined 27 to be "judicial emergencies." Over 2013, the number of vacancies steadily climbed to around 90. While we were able to confirm a total of 46 judicial nominees this year, including 11 circuit court and 31 district court nominees, we were unable to keep pace with new vacancies. By December of this year, there were a total of 88 judicial vacancies, 35 of which are judicial emergency vacancies. In stark contrast, at the end of the fifth year of the Bush administration, there were only 49 judicial vacancies, including 16 judicial emergency vacancies.

This year, the Senate voted to confirm two high-level nominees to key law enforcement positions at the U.S. Department of Justice: James Comey, Jr. to be the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and B. Todd Jones to be the Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. It was unfortunate that the majority leader was required to file cloture on both of these nominations before we could get to a confirmation vote. In stark contrast with the treatment of previous FBI Director nominees, who were all confirmed by the full Senate within a day or two of being reported by the Judiciary Committee, James Comey is the first FBI Director nominee in Senate history to be filibustered. He was ultimately confirmed overwhelmingly by a vote of 93 to 1. Two days later, the Senate confirmed B. Todd Jones by a vote of 53 to 42, making him the first confirmed

head of the ATF since that position became Senate-confirmable in 2006.

The consideration of nominations is one of the most important functions of the Judiciary Committee. I am hopeful that we will not see the same sort of obstructionism and dilatory tactics that we encountered during 2013.

In the coming year, we must redouble our efforts to work past our differences to find bipartisan, commonsense solutions to our Nation's problems; I know that that is what Vermonters expect of me. We have seen so far in this Congress an unprecedented level of gridlock, partisanship, and political brinksmanship, which culminated in a costly and unnecessary Republican government shutdown in October. We can and must do better, and I hope that we can put the obstructionism of this past year behind us. The American people expect and deserve better. We owe it to our constituents to work together to pass commonsense bipartisan compromise legislation, and we have already seen that we can do just that. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to build upon the progress we have made and find meaningful solutions to the many challenges we face as a country.

VERMONT'S GRANITE INDUSTRY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to talk about a unique Vermont asset that recently gained national attention: the granite industry. Due largely to its versatility, high quality and immense quantity, granite proved integral to the early economic development of my home State and continues to play a vital role today.

The people of Barre, VT, have been mining granite since the 1800s, when it was learned that the unusually high quality of the stone found in the town's hillsides was in high demand. This discovery had local and global implications. Granite from the Rock of Ages quarry in Barre was supplied to help construct columns in the Vermont State House that still stand today. Additionally, the art of stone carving that the granite industry created attracted skilled immigrants to Vermont from throughout Europe and Canada. In fact, both my grandfathers were stone carvers in Vermont.

With its museum, tours, and even a sandblasting experience, the Rock of Ages quarry has expanded its offerings to serve as an educational and historical site, attracting visitors from around the world. Recently, the Timberland Boot Company visited the quarry for a photo shoot. They became so enamored by the community and its people that they ended up highlighting the area in a new line of footwear, noting that it was influenced by "a 150-year-old granite industry that transformed the tiny New England town into an international destination for commerce and art."

I am very proud of the people of Barre for embracing and preserving the

important history and culture the granite industry brought to Vermont. The recognition that the Timberland Boot Company gave to Rock of Ages is well deserved.

I ask that an article printed in The Barre-Montpelier Times Argus on November 26, 2013, "Marketers find Barre history just the right fit," be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

[From the Barre-Montpelier Times Argus, Nov. 26, 2013]

MARKETERS FIND BARRE HISTORY JUST THE RIGHT FIT

If you don't think the local granite industry has a story still worth telling, try selling that to the folks at The Timberland Boot Co., who turned what was supposed to be a routine photo shoot at Rock of Ages last year into a multimedia campaign that is very Barre.

"It's pretty impressive," Rock of Ages spokeswoman Amanda Pittsley said of the newly launched digital campaign for Timberland's high-end heritage collection.

"Originally, they were just looking for a rugged place to go with their new line of boots," Pittsley recalled. "They were just hoping to use a panoramic of the top of the quarry as an intro to this 'mine' of products as far as their industrial boot."

The photo shoot a year ago turned Quarry Hill into boot hill for a day and a half.

"We literally spent all day carrying around boots," she recalled of Rock of Ages' attempt to accommodate a photographer and a creative director interested in making the most out of a texture-rich setting that includes everything from the frequently photographed quarry with its towering derricks to rough-cut granite blocks and weathered railroad tracks.

"They wanted different textures to show behind the boots," she said. "We were just going to be the granite backdrop."

Or so Pittsley thought until she recently visited <http://abington.timberland.com> and learned the photo shoot had "morphed into an entire product line" that makes up Timberland's latest Abington Collection—a nod to the company's first incarnation as The Abington Shoe Co.

"The Abington Fall '13 Collection was influenced by the people of Barre, Vt., and a 150 year old granite industry that transformed the tiny New England town into an international destination for commerce and art."

So says the slick website, which announces a product line that features several styles of boots and a shoe "designed with the Italian sculptor in mind."

The site features a collection of historic Barre photographs to go along with the marketing shots that were taken last year, a couple of timelines, and a few video cameos featuring Italian-born granite sculptor Giuliano Cecchinelli.

"Shop the collection that Barre inspired," it concludes.

Pittsley was impressed.

"You would have thought we went to them," she said.

According to Pittsley, it isn't unusual for Rock of Ages to field photo requests from fashion editors and companies like Lenovo interested in using the quarry as a backdrop, but the company rarely gets to see the end result.

"We're just a site," she said.

Pittsley said she never imagined the sort of spread Timberland came up with when the

photographer and creative director headed into Barre to see what they might find at the Vermont Granite Museum and the Vermont History Center.

What they found, Pittsley surmised, was a story ready to be told.

"I think they were just overwhelmed with how much information there was," she said.

Though they can be purchased online, the boots said to be inspired by the people and the industry that put Barre on the map are available at only two Vermont locations, according to the website: Maven on Cherry Street in Burlington and Manchester Footwear on Main Street in Manchester.

DETROIT DIESEL

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, 2013 marks a significant milestone for a dynamic company based in Detroit, MI. It is the 75th anniversary of the founding of Detroit Diesel. Detroit enjoys a rich automotive heritage and has been a hub of innovation and manufacturing for generations. Many companies throughout the State have contributed to this impressive legacy. One of those companies is Detroit Diesel, and I am proud to recognize this innovative company here today.

Founded in 1938, Detroit Diesel has emerged as a leader in the heavy-truck engine industry and an important contributor to Michigan's economy. What began as a company focused on producing engines for the Allied Forces in World War II has expanded through the years to include an array of products used in a number of sectors. Detroit Diesel has a well-earned reputation for quality, has championed a number of technological breakthroughs in the manufacturing industry and is a committed community partner. These accomplishments are a tribute to the many hard-working people that make their success possible year after year. And I have witnessed firsthand some of the cutting edge technologies Detroit Diesel has pioneered.

Demand Performance is Detroit Diesel's hallmark, and they have achieved this in their product development and in the community. With a workforce of more than 2,000 in the city of Detroit, Detroit Diesel is a wonderful example of what is possible through cooperation and economic opportunities. This is evident in the announcement last fall of a \$120 million capital investment by Detroit Diesel. This investment brings greater hope and new possibilities for the company and the city. It is also evident in their commitment to the community through their many charitable activities focused on helping families, protecting and improving the environment, and assisting various educational endeavors.

During its 75 years of existence, Detroit Diesel has made a significant contribution to Michigan's economy. As a lifelong Detroit resident, I am keenly aware of how business development helps to create and sustain jobs, to stabilize neighborhoods and to build the middle class. I commend Detroit Diesel for their entrepreneurial spirit and for