

S. 2262 has the support of a broad coalition of stakeholders, including energy efficiency, business, and environmental organizations, small and large businesses, utilities, and public interest groups. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of S. 2262 and urge its swift passage.

REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, May 13, 2014.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL: I am requesting that I be consulted before the Senate enters into any unanimous consent agreements or time limitations regarding S. 357, National Blue Alert Act of 2013.

I support the goals of this legislation and believe suspects who seriously injure or kill federal, state or local law enforcement officers in the line of duty should be apprehended as quickly as possible. However, I believe the responsibility to address this issue, as it relates to state and local law enforcement officers, lies with the states and local communities that these brave law enforcement officers serve. Furthermore, while I do not believe this issue is the responsibility of the federal government, if Congress does act, we can and must do so in a fiscally responsible manner. My concerns are included in, but not limited to, those outlined in this letter.

While this bill is well-intentioned, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), it will cost the American people \$1 million dollars every year without corresponding offsets. I recognize this bill does not contain the authorization of appropriations included in prior versions of this legislation; however, establishing a new program which requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to carry out additional responsibilities, even if implemented by existing staff, is not free of future costs, as recognized by CBO. Furthermore, there is no sunset provision contained in this legislation. Thus, once enacted, the annual \$1 million price tag for this program will continue in perpetuity.

It is irresponsible for Congress to jeopardize the future standard of living of our children by borrowing from future generations. The U.S. national debt is now over \$17.4 trillion. That means approximately \$55,000 in debt for each man, woman and child in the United States. A year ago, the national debt was \$16.7 trillion. Despite pledges to control spending, Washington adds billions to the national debt every single day. In just one year, our national debt has grown by \$700 billion or 4.19%.

In addition to these fiscal concerns, there are several problems specific to this legislation. First, there is no need to establish a national Blue Alert system because many states have already developed their own Blue Alert programs for the same purposes outlined in this bill, including alerts issued for the injury or death of federal, as well as state and local law enforcement officers. In 2008, Florida and Texas were the first states to establish these programs. Seventeen additional states soon followed—Oklahoma, Maryland, Georgia, Delaware, California, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Utah, Colorado, South Carolina, Washington, Ohio,

Kentucky, Indiana, Connecticut, and Illinois. The last three states to initiate a Blue Alert system did so in the 1-year period since the House passed its version of this bill in May 2012. Arizona and Kansas will likely begin their systems this summer and fall, respectively. Several state legislatures currently have legislation pending that would establish a Blue Alert system, including Minnesota, Alabama, and Missouri.

Furthermore, there is no data to support the success of the existing state Blue Alert programs. Oklahoma established its Blue Alert system in 2009, but it is not yet fully functional. The last three states to establish an alert system did so just within the last year. As a result, not only have states already established their own programs, but from the limited use of the existing systems, there is no clear evidence of a substantial need for a Blue Alert system, or of the consistent, successful apprehension of suspects as a direct result of a Blue Alert. If anything, we should wait for these programs to produce results that can be examined and determine whether this type of system is useful before instituting a federal, one-size-fits-all program.

Second, while the bill's supporters likely envision pursuing suspects who have injured or killed a law enforcement officer in a routine traffic stop or while fleeing a crime scene, for example, the bill's definition of "law enforcement officer" is much broader. The bill incorporates the definition in Section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, which includes "an individual involved in crime and juvenile delinquency control or reduction, or enforcement of the criminal laws (including juvenile delinquency), including, but not limited to, police, corrections, probation, parole, and judicial officers." As a result, a Blue Alert could be issued for a state court bailiff; a state parole officer, or an officer within a state's juvenile corrections facility, if injured in the line of duty.

Finally, I do not believe the federal government has the authority under the Constitution to provide federal funds to coordinate the tracking of state and local fugitives or to establish national protocols to apprehend suspects accused of injuring or killing state and local law enforcement officers. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution enumerates the limited powers of Congress, and nowhere are we tasked with funding or becoming involved with state and local criminal issues.

There is no question those suspected of injuring or killing a state or local law enforcement officer in the line of duty should be aggressively pursued and prosecuted. However, I believe this issue is the responsibility of the states and not the federal government. Despite these Constitutional limitations, if Congress does act in this area, like most American individuals and companies must do with their own resources, we should evaluate current programs, determine any needs that may exist, and prioritize those needs for funding by cutting from the federal budget programs fraught with waste, fraud, abuse, and duplication.

Sincerely,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.,

U.S. Senator.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA PAPP

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I wish to pay special tribute to an invaluable public servant, Mrs. Linda Papp. Coast Guard first lady, career educator, mother, and grandmother—Linda has tirelessly

worked for more than 39 years to improve the lives of Coast Guard military families.

Linda is a native of East Lyme, CT, and is the oldest of Frank and Doris Kapral's six daughters. Her father, Frank, is a retired Coast Guard captain and fondly known throughout the service as "Coach Kapral" for his two decades leading the Coast Guard Academy football team. Linda holds a bachelor's and master's degree in education, and is the proud mother of three children, Lindsay, Caitlin and Jillian, and two granddaughters, Penelope and Ruby.

As the wife of the 24th Commandant, ADM Robert J. Papp, Linda serves as the Coast Guard's Ombudsman-at-Large and regularly travels to meet with Coast Guard families. She advocates on behalf of families to the First Lady of the United States, Members of Congress, Department of Defense, and other Federal, State and local leaders to improve the quality of life for thousands of servicemembers. She relentlessly focuses on improving military housing, member and family access to quality health care, and the Coast Guard's Ombudsman Program.

Of her 39 years as a military spouse, she spent 14 of those years watching six different Coast Guard cutters pull away from the pier. She understands that the strength and resilience of family members on the home front provides critical support to all of our Coast Guard men and women who stand the watch. She supports our men and women in uniform and those who keep the home fires burning and who every day face the unique challenges of a military lifestyle. They will always have a special place in her life, and in her heart.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Mrs. Linda Papp. Our Coast Guard and our country are served well by honorable and giving military spouses like Linda who truly care about the health and well being of those who serve. We wish Linda, Admiral Papp, and their family all the best as we honor one of our dear friends.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

O'BRIEN COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of

my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of O'Brien County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to successfully acquire financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$9.4 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memory of working together has to be our shared commitment to improving firefighter safety.

Among the highlights:

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than \$132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, O'Brien County has received \$711,622 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in O'Brien County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling \$112,952.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, O'Brien County has received more than \$3.7 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first re-

sponders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, O'Brien County's fire departments have received over \$996,000 for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Disability Rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in Iowa—not just in curb cuts or closed captioned television, but in the full participation of people with disabilities in our society and economy, folks who at long last have the opportunity to contribute their talents and to be fully included. These changes have increased economic opportunities for all citizens of O'Brien County, both those with and without disabilities. And they make us proud to be a part of a community and country that respects the worth and civil rights of all of our citizens.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically O'Brien County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in O'Brien County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

PALO ALTO COUNTY, IOWA

● **Mr. HARKIN.** Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades rep-

resenting Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Palo Alto County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Palo Alto County worth over \$1 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$116 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memory of working together has to be working with the community to support the Iowa Lakes Community College. I am especially pleased with the college's work on sustainable energy.

Among the highlights:

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Northwest Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for residents of Palo Alto County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Palo Alto County, I have fought for funding for Iowa Lakes Community College projects worth over \$3.7 million, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than \$132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Palo Alto County has received \$484,540 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Palo Alto County have received funds