

Enough is enough. It is time for the House Republicans to act. They have wasted far too much time already failing to consider a bill that the Senate considered, and passed in less than 2 months.

A year ago the Senate Judiciary Committee, under Chairman LEAHY's leadership, was in the middle of marking up the commonsense immigration reform. After 2 weeks of consideration, what did they do? A bipartisan bill was reported out of that committee. Within a month the Senate passed immigration reform and sent it to the House of Representatives. It was a good start. It was really good. But in our system of government, what we did here will have absolutely no meaning unless the House takes it up. We were able to move on immigration reform quickly because both Senate Democrats and Senate Republicans understood the need to fix a broken system.

What is the House Republicans' excuse? Why are they doing this? What are they achieving by dragging their feet on immigration reform? They claim to be working on things—they say jobs, they say legislation to reduce the debt. If they are really interested in reducing the debt, pass this bill. It is \$1 trillion to reduce our debt—\$1 trillion. What are they doing over there? Day after day, investigations—they investigate everything and accomplish nothing.

The fact is that the Senate-passed immigration bill reduces the deficit and spurs the economy more than the House-passed bills awaiting Senate action combined. I repeat: \$1 trillion. The immigration legislation passed by the Senate reduces the deficit more than all the bills passed by the House that are currently awaiting action in the Senate.

So it is no wonder that even pro-Republican organizations are calling on Speaker BOEHNER to stop wasting time. Earlier this week we heard Tom Donohue, the president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, say that it is in the Republicans' best interests to pass immigration reform. He said unless the House passes immigration reform this year, Republicans shouldn't even bother running in 2016. So that is what he said, and it is probably true.

Politics should not be the only reason the House passes this bill. Immigration reform is far more important than any election-year politicking. Immigration reform is about families and communities.

The DREAM Act is a perfect example. In September 2010, I was in the midst of what some considered a tough re-election campaign when I helped champion Senator DURBIN's DREAM Act. Though it was eventually blocked by a Republican filibuster, I did my best to pass the DREAM Act, even as some said it would cost me the election. As everyone knows by this time, the President, as he said in his State of the Union Address—and he did this last Congress and he is doing it this Con-

gress—because we are doing virtually nothing here in the Senate, he decided to do something administratively. That is why we have deferred status for these young men and women who want to go into the military, finish their education, and this is the only place they have ever known as home.

The bill that passed here is common sense. Eleven million people—we cannot fiscally deport 11 million people. We cannot physically do it. It just will not work. That is why the legislation that was crafted here on a bipartisan basis is fair to everyone. What it says is that if this is your home and you have improper papers, we will give you some time to get those adjusted. It is going to take some time. You are not going to go to the front of the line; you are going to go to the back of the line. You are going to have to pay taxes. You are going to have to work. You are going to have to stay out of trouble and learn English. It would take about a dozen years to have your status adjusted, but at least during that period of time you can come out of the shadows.

Recently, though, the House Judiciary Committee chairman appeared on a Sunday news show and tried very, very unsuccessfully to justify his party's inaction. His reasoning as to why the House is dragging its heels? Republicans claim President Obama cannot be trusted to enforce immigration law. So what Republicans are really saying is that they will not act on immigration reform unless there are more deportations, more families torn apart. That does not make a lot of sense to most people. In a nutshell, it is the House immigration platform.

Why work to help undocumented immigrants get right with the law? Why do that? Because it is good for the country. It is fair. And, as I have indicated, it is good monetarily for this country. But what the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee said on one of those Sunday shows is in keeping with what they have done. It is hard to comprehend.

I guess that is what we have learned to expect from a House Republican conference whose immigration policy is dictated by the likes of Congressman STEVEN KING. Remember him, Mr. President? He is the Congressman who, instead of permitting immigrants to enlist in the military and earn citizenship, would rather send them "on a bus back to Tijuana." That is a quote from him. Congressman KING also claimed that for every hard-working undocumented student, there are 100 more working as drug mules with "calves the size of cantaloupes because they're hauling 75 pounds of marijuana across the desert."

The fact of the matter is that these men and women, with their families, are our neighbors, our classmates, our colleagues. They are here for a lot of different reasons. They have overstayed their visas. Some were brought here illegally. But we have to deal with

this issue. So many of them are like Astrid Silva, who is one of the DREAMers. She was 4 years old, a little girl in a boat coming across the Rio Grande River. She had her Rosary beads and a little doll and her mom. Nevada is the only place she has ever known as home. Because she was so frightened, she was afraid to go anywhere.

This is the right thing to do. We need to move forward on comprehensive immigration reform, and we can only do that if the Republicans in the House, led by Speaker BOEHNER, do the right thing. It is very important. I urge the House to stop wasting time and bring immigration reform to a vote. Give the American people the assurance that we are working to finally mend our broken immigration system and give families the opportunity to come forward and work toward legal status. It really is the right thing to do.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

POLICE WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this week we recognize National Police Week. National Police Week is a time to pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of the men and women in Federal, State, and local law enforcement across our Nation. Law enforcement is one of our Nation's highest callings, as brave peace officers put themselves on the line to defend the lives, safety and property of their neighbors. Therefore, it is entirely appropriate that we pause this week and throughout the year to thank them for their service.

The Nation's capital is host to thousands of police officers who have come to celebrate National Police Week with their fellow officers. No one but another peacekeeper or their families can truly grasp the duty of defending their communities. No one but another peacekeeper can truly know the joys of camaraderie and the sorrows of deep loss that each one has experienced.

I want to especially recognize the many men and women of Kentucky law enforcement. Many of them have traveled to Washington this week, and I will have the pleasure of meeting with some of Kentucky's finest and their families later today, including the Ellis family and the Shaw family.

I am personally grateful to them for bravely risking their lives in our defense. Sadly, this occasion of National

Police Week is also the time when we pay tribute to two brave and honorable police officers from the Commonwealth of Kentucky who have fallen in the line of duty in the past year.

Deputy Sheriff Chad D. Shaw of the McCracken County Sheriff's Department tragically suffered a fatal heart attack on August 6, 2013. He was 47 years old. Deputy Shaw had been at the Community Christian Academy in Western Kentucky, near Paducah, helping coordinate security for a meeting among the faculty and staff to kick off the new school year when he collapsed and was immediately taken to Baptist Health in Paducah.

Tragically, it was too late for the U.S. Army veteran and 12-year veteran of the McCracken County Sheriff's Department. McCracken County Sheriff Joe Hayden says: "Deputy Shaw will always be remembered for his love of his family, his love for helping others, and the thoroughness in the way he did his job as a public servant for the citizens that he served."

Deputy Shaw leaves behind his wife Margaret and two daughters. I express my deepest condolences to them, as well as to members of the McCracken County Sheriff's Department and to all who knew Deputy Shaw at the loss of this fine and good man who chose to wear the uniform of both his country and his Commonwealth and brought honor to both.

I also pay tribute to another Kentucky officer lost to us in the last year, officer Jason Scott Ellis of the Bardstown Police Department. Officer Ellis was tragically killed on May 25 of last year. He was 33 years old. Officer Ellis was killed when he was en route home following his shift. He was in uniform and driving a marked vehicle. It is believed he was ambushed by a subject who deliberately placed debris in the middle of the roadway, causing Officer Ellis to stop and exit his vehicle.

As Officer Ellis removed the debris, the killer or killers opened fire from a nearby hilltop, shooting him multiple times and killing him instantly. It is no exaggeration to call what happened to Officer Ellis an assassination. Mad-deningly, the killer or killers are still at large.

Officer Ellis's tragic death marked the first time in the history of the Bardstown Police Department for an officer to be killed in the line of duty. A reward for the assassin, or assassins, still at large has grown to over a quarter of a million dollars.

Commissioner Rodney Brewer of the Kentucky State Police pledges that his troopers will continue to aggressively investigate this heinous murder until an arrest is made. Kentucky State Police, Bardstown police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation continue to seek the public's assistance with any detail, regardless of how small, regarding the evening of Officer Ellis's death, May 25, 2013.

Ellis was a huge asset to his force. He was not only a field-training officer,

but he was also their only K-9 officer. With his police dog Figo, he fought illegal drug use in Bardstown. Few can forget one of the iconic photos of 2013 that featured Figo resting his paw on the coffin of his departed partner Officer Ellis at the funeral service.

Bardstown Police Chief Rick McCubbin credited Officer Ellis with being one of the department's top officers when it came to arrests and making a dent in the drug problem.

"He also made me feel like he was Superman," says Amy Ellis, Officer Ellis's wife, "that nothing would ever happen to him." Chief Rick McCubbin says Officer Ellis paid the ultimate sacrifice doing what he loved, being a police officer.

Jason Ellis was a native of Cincinnati and a student at the University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg, KY. At school he was a star baseball player. He set records for alltime career hits, doubles, home runs, and career games played. He went on to play minor league baseball in the Cincinnati Reds system from 2002 to 2005.

Even as the star of the baseball diamond, however, coaches and teammates remember Jason Ellis talking about becoming a law enforcement officer. His wife Amy says:

He was always a go-getter . . . He was dedicated to his job and he wanted to clean the streets up. And that was the way to get the drugs off the streets.

Officer Ellis was a 7-year veteran of the Bardstown Police Department. He leaves behind a grieving family, including his wife Amy, his two young sons Parker and Hunter, two sisters, his mother and stepfather, and many other beloved family members and friends.

More than 300 people attended a candlelight vigil for Officer Ellis outside the police station shortly after his murder. On May 30 of last year, Officer Ellis was laid to rest at Highview Cemetery in Nelson County. Fellow law enforcement officers from across Kentucky and as far away as Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois came to pay their respects. Hundreds of police cruisers helped to make up the funeral procession over those beautiful rolling hills and country roads of Nelson County.

Over 1,000 people filled the church sanctuary to capacity, with even more standing in the aisles, to show their reverence and respect for Officer Ellis's service and his sacrifice. Chief Rick McCubbin says this about his tragic slaying:

It's basically a large family here and a lot of these officers have worked together many years, so as you can imagine they are very close. They know each other well, they know each other's families, each other's children, so it's a devastating hit.

Officer Ellis's loss is a devastating hit not only to his family, not only to his brother officers, but to all of us throughout Kentucky who respect and admire the men and women who wear a police uniform and make a solemn vow to defend the lives of others, even at the cost of their own.

I want to express my deepest condolences to Officer Ellis's family, to the members of the Bardstown Police Department, and to peace officers across Kentucky for the loss of one very brave officer: Jason Scott Ellis.

I am relieved to say that for the grieving family members of Officer Ellis, Deputy Shaw, and every peace officer lost in the line of duty across our Nation, resources to help are available. One of those resources is COPS, or Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. COPS members include spouses, children, parents, siblings, significant others, and affected coworkers of officers killed in the line of duty.

The Kentucky chapter of COPS has been at the forefront of serving this mission. Last year Kentucky COPS hosted the Traumas in Law Enforcement seminar for law enforcement agencies to learn how to deal with line-of-duty deaths. With 62 participants, it was one of the highest attended seminars that any COPS chapter or organization has ever put on. This is an organization that does not forget, taking care of the families of our fallen law enforcement heroes long after their watches end.

I am proud of our Bluegrass State peace officers for taking the lead in helping other men and women in blue to deal with these tragic losses. As I have just related in the stories of Officer Ellis and Deputy Shaw, any loss of a law enforcement officer is too great a price to pay for the families and communities they protect.

I will be honored to meet with some members of the Kentucky COPS who are here in the Nation's Capital for National Police Week today in my office. Sherry Bryant is the wife of Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources officer Douglas Bryant, who was tragically killed in the line of duty back in 2003.

Laurie Stricklen is the wife of police officer James "Stumpy" Stricklen of the Alexandria, KY, Police Department, who suffered a fatal heart attack on March 24 as a result of injuries sustained after restraining a suspect.

Anthony Jansen is the son of police officer Anthony Jansen of the Newport Police Department, who was accidentally shot and killed while in the line of duty on December 30, 1984. His son Tony carries on his father's tradition as he is himself now a police officer.

So I am privileged to welcome all of those brave police survivors as well as the families of Officer Jason Ellis and Deputy Clay Shaw to my office today. To honor these fallen heroes and to help bring justice to those who would injure or kill our police officers, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the National Blue Alert Act. This bipartisan legislation calls for what would be equivalent to a national AMBER Alert system to efficiently share information with the public when a law enforcement officer is killed or seriously injured.

I know my colleagues in the Senate join me in holding the deepest admiration and respect for the many brave

law enforcement officers across Kentucky and the Nation. We are grateful so many have come to town for National Police Week.

We recognize theirs as both an honorable profession and a dangerous one. We recognize that what they do is vitally necessary to maintain peace and order in a civil society.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2014— MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3474, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 332, H.R. 3474, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it pains me to say that almost every day brings a new story of reported scandals and a long list of failures and abuses within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The latest scandals are particularly painful to me because they emanate from Texas, and we have a proud tradition of being a State that contributes a large number of uniformed military members from our State—and, of course, we have a huge population of veterans, people who have worn the uniform of the United States proudly, sacrificed so much, and risked it all. But just like the scandals in Fort Collins, CO; Phoenix, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; and in other cities, the ones in Austin, San Antonio, Harlingen, and Waco are evidence of a callous disregard for the health and well-being of America's heroes.

The new information comes from a pair of whistleblowers. The first one, a VA scheduling clerk named Brian Turner, told the Austin American-Statesman that his supervisors at the VA facilities in Austin, San Antonio, and Waco were directing him to falsify appointment data in hopes of covering up the problem of long wait times.

Meanwhile, the former associate chief of staff at the Harlingen VA Health Care Center, a man by the name of Dr. Richard Krugman, has gone public with a series of disturbing allegations, according to the Washington Examiner, which interviewed Dr. Krugman. Veterans seeking routine colonoscopies—cancer screening, in other words—at the Harlingen center

were forced to endure extremely long wait times and, in some cases, they were denied those cancer screenings altogether. He said, as a result, up to “15,000 patients [veterans all] who should have gotten colonoscopies either did not get them or were examined only after long and needless delays.”

Dr. Krugman believes that some of these veterans actually died as a result of the lack of cancer screening and addressing their symptoms.

He also told the Examiner that “an office secretary deleted about 1,800 orders for medical tests or other services to eliminate a backlog that threatened a certification inspection from an outside group.”

Sadly, these allegations fit within a larger pattern of VA abuses. At VA clinics across the country, reports have been made that staffers and administrators have failed to provide veterans with reliable access to medical care and have fraudulently concealed long wait times. Given all these examples, they are not just an individual data point, but in connecting these data points it appears that the problems with the Veterans Administration are systemic.

What we have is nothing less than a betrayal, a betrayal of our Nation's veterans, and a betrayal of the American people, all of whom deserve to know the truth about what their government is or is not doing to support our American heroes. Of course, we have heard in Phoenix that this betrayal has had tragic consequences, with an estimated up to 40 people dying after lingering on a secret waiting list—never receiving the treatment that they were entitled to.

We still don't know exactly how many veterans have died or otherwise have suffered because of the VA's assorted failures and abuses, but we do know that it is disgraceful and unacceptable for even one veteran to needlessly die or suffer because of bureaucratic malfeasance. The evidence of such malfeasance is now growing, of course. The only questions are: How can we get our veterans the care and support they need in the fastest possible way; and what is the best way to restore genuine accountability and genuine safeguards within the VA system?

Whenever I think about the ongoing VA scandals and the broader set of challenges facing America's veterans, I think of an annual tradition that we have in Texas. Every year on Memorial Day I host young Texans who are being sent off to their service academies. These are inspiring young men and women. Anyone who is feeling a little bit uncertain about our Nation's future needs to meet these young men and women who go to our service academies. They are the best of the best and are an inspiration to me.

This is a wonderful event and easily one of the highlights of my year. Yet I can't think of how badly the VA is failing not only our current generation

but tainting that promise of our commitment to the next generation of our military servicemembers and veterans. The generation that is now preparing to embark for places such as West Point, Annapolis, and Colorado Springs—these young people should be given not just a promise but an iron-clad commitment that after serving our Nation with honor and courage they will get the support they have earned and they deserve.

Anything less is just not acceptable. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

EXPIRE ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the Senate is now debating the EXPIRE Act.

This is bipartisan legislation. I again thank the distinguished Senator from Utah Mr. HATCH. He has been so constructive in trying to build a bipartisan piece of legislation, a bill that came out of the Senate Finance Committee several weeks ago with very substantial bipartisan support.

It really is designed to deal with a number of tax provisions that are temporary in nature and it, in effect, extends those temporary tax provisions until the end of 2015. In consultation with the distinguished Senator from Utah, I thought it was important to call this bill the EXPIRE Act. It was important because this legislation actually does expire after 2 years.

It, in effect, says—and I said—on my watch as chair of the Senate Finance Committee there will not be another extenders bill. It is not going to happen on my watch. This is it.

In effect, by extending these important provisions now for one last time, the Congress can give itself and the Finance Committee—on a bipartisan basis—the space that is needed to take on the challenge of comprehensive tax reform.

It is not going to be easy, but it is absolutely imperative for the future of the American economy. I know it can be done. I know we can get Senators of both political parties together and build a bipartisan tax reform plan. I know this because I have—and other Senators do as well—a fair amount of sweat equity in this cause.

Our former colleague Senator Gregg of New Hampshire sat next to me on a sofa for more than 2 years to build what still is the only bipartisan Senate comprehensive tax reform bill in the last 30 years. With Senator Gregg's retirement, to their credit, Senator COATS and Senator BEGICH pitched in.

So we know that there has already been a lot of bipartisan work on comprehensive tax reform and, suffice it to say, again building on this bipartisan lineage. My colleague from Utah, the senior Senator Mr. HATCH, and Ambassador Baucus and Chairman CAMP in the other body, have also put in years of work and laid a strong foundation for tax reform.

So once the Senate passes the EXPIRE Act, the job of the Finance Committee will be to focus in a kind of