

govern benefit equivalency between nonimmigrant visa holders and their U.S. counterparts. It is also not Congress's intent to impact or diminish in any way an employee's rights under title VII of the Civil Rights Act or any other antidiscrimination protections or to preempt any relevant State law governing employees' rights.

The Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act is a bipartisan, technical clarification of health insurance law, intended to place U.S. expatriate health insurers on equal footing with their foreign counterparts. We look forward to the passage of this bill and are grateful for the bipartisan coalition that has worked so constructively to find a path forward on this issue.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF DIVISION M OF THE CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, THE EXPATRIATE HEALTH COVERAGE CLARIFICATION ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a statement in support of Division M of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act be printed in the RECORD.

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

STATEMENT OF SENATORS WYDEN, HATCH, HARKIN, ALEXANDER, SESSIONS, CARPER, TOOMEY, COONS, AND RUBIO IN SUPPORT OF DIVISION M OF THE CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, THE EXPATRIATE HEALTH COVERAGE CLARIFICATION ACT

The undersigned submit the following Statement for the Record in support of Division M of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, as amended by Senators Carper, Toomey, Coons, and Rubio.

The Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act is a bipartisan, technical clarification of health insurance law, intended to place U.S. expatriate health insurers on equal footing with their foreign counterparts. We look forward to the passage of Division M and are grateful for the bipartisan coalition that has worked so constructively to find a path forward.

The purpose of this bipartisan and technical bill is to ensure that U.S. health insurers who provide expatriate health insurance plans encounter the same legal requirements and expectations as foreign expatriate health insurers. Further, it is important to clarify that the intent of the language regarding the application of section 4980I of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to "qualified expatriates" who are "assigned" to work in the United States means that, notwithstanding other provisions in the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, the excise tax continues to apply in the case of highly skilled qualified expatriates, as defined by this legislation, who are newly assigned to

work within the United States in a specialty occupation and should not apply with respect to qualified expatriates working in the United States with L, E, O, and R visa classifications. Furthermore, this legislation is not intended to expand the universe of eligible employer-sponsored coverage to which section 4980I applies.

The Department of the Treasury will be drafting regulations to implement the portions of Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act that fall within its responsibility. It is important to highlight the definition of "qualified expatriates" who are "assigned" to work in the United States because it is the intent of Congress that the Treasury regulation relating to Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, and code section 4980I, in particular be promulgated and implemented in a timely and workable manner.

NOMINATION OF DR. VIVEK MURTHY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I urge the Senate to schedule an immediate vote on the nomination of Dr. Vivek Murthy to serve as the next Surgeon General of the United States. One year ago, President Obama nominated Dr. Murthy to serve as our next Surgeon General. Ten months ago, Dr. Murthy's nomination was approved by the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, HELP, Committee. Since then, his nomination has stalled. I, along with many of my colleagues, have written to Senate leadership, requesting an immediate floor vote. Yet—here we are—still no vote.

The Surgeon General serves as "America's Doctor." He ensures Americans are receiving the very best scientific information available in order to improve their health and reduce risk of injury or illness. The Surgeon General also oversees the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, a group of 7,000 men and women who are uniformed public health professionals working throughout the federal government to protect, promote, and advance our Nation's health. Finally, the Surgeon General is responsible for chairing the National Prevention Council.

The urgent need to have a Surgeon General in place and at-the-ready is never more evident than when we are confronted with a public health crisis, as we are now. Over the past many months, our global community has struggled to respond to the Ebola epidemic plaguing West Africa and threatening communities nationwide. The United States has been rightly focused on dealing with the epidemic at its epicenter in West Africa, protecting our ports of entry, and protecting America's public health. Yet, our response has been hindered because we do not have a confirmed U.S. Surgeon General in place.

Households across our nation were flooded with misinformation and confusion when Ebola was first diagnosed in the United States. If Dr. Murthy had been in place as Surgeon General, he would have been responsible for in-

creasing public understanding about Ebola; providing accurate, important, and timely medical information; and helping to ease fears. As "America's Doctor" he would have provided an additional trusted voice that could have communicated with the public and helped address their concerns. Instead, "America's Doctor" was sitting on the sidelines awaiting a Senate vote on his nomination.

Like so many of us, Dr. Murthy is the son of immigrant parents. He completed his early education in Miami, FL, and attended college at Harvard University where he received a bachelor's degree in biochemical sciences. He went on to receive an MD from the Yale School of Medicine and an MBA in Health Care Management from the Yale School of Management. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Brigham and Woman's Hospital.

As a physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Dr. Murthy has cared for patients with a range of illnesses from diabetes and cardiovascular disease to cancer and infections. As a researcher, he has worked on vaccine development and he has studied the inclusion of women and minorities in clinical trials. As a teacher at Harvard Medical School, he knows what issues face our next generation of doctors. As a public health educator, Dr. Murthy created HIV/AIDS education programs for thousands of young people through an organization he cofounded. He built a rural community health partnership in India to train young women to be health care educators and leaders. As an organizational leader, Dr. Murthy cofounded a national medical organization, Doctors for America, to improve communication between physicians, patients, and policy makers. Finally, as a leader in prevention, he served on the Advisory Group to the National Prevention Council and helped develop the nation's first National Prevention Strategy. I think it is pretty clear that Dr. Murthy has the background and the boots on the ground expertise to serve as our Nation's 19th Surgeon General.

Doubts about his ability to serve as Surgeon General are not the problem holding up his nomination. I fear that policy matters outside the scope of this position are actually to blame. I hope that my colleagues do not let public policy debates unrelated to the position in which he would serve stall his nomination any longer.

Dr. Murthy's nomination has received widespread support from local, State, and national public health organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, and American Public Health Association.

It is time to confirm Dr. Murthy as our Nation's 19th Surgeon General. It is time to take "America's Doctor" off the sidelines and put him into the game. Thank you.

ENACTMENT OF THE HARRIET TUBMAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARKS ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I wish to celebrate the long awaited enactment of the Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks Act, a bill to establish the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, NY. This is an effort that I have worked closely with Senators MIKULSKI, SCHUMER and GILLIBRAND as well as Secretary Clinton, when she represented New York in this body, and mark the culmination of the legislative work on this effort started by my predecessor, Senator Sarbanes when he passed legislation commissioning the National Service to conduct a Special Resource Study on Harriet Tubman. We all share a deep appreciation for how important establishing these parks is to preserving the legacy of this remarkable historical figure in American History but also to how important these parks will be to the communities where they will be located.

In my career, I have spoken on the Senate Floor, at events in Maryland, in meetings with constituents and with my colleagues about Harriet Tubman's legacy. While I hope each opportunity I have taken to discuss the life of this remarkable woman helps raise awareness about her importance to the history of our great nation, my ultimate goal has always been to properly commemorate her life and her work by establishing the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and, to establish the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, NY.

For the last 7 years I have championed the legislation that was enacted today as part of the National Defense Authorization Act.

I also greatly appreciate the support this legislation received in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate as a whole. In both this Congress and the 112 Congress, the Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks Act was reported out of committee with bipartisan support including the support of Chairwoman LANDRIEU and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI. I am incredibly grateful for the work of the Chair and Ranking Member, and their staffs, to maintain progress on the bill which has led to its passage today.

The establishment of the Harriet Tubman Historical Parks has been years in the making and is long overdue. The mission of the National Park Service has evolved over time from not only preserving natural wonders across the U.S. for recreational purposes but also commemorating unique places of significance to historical events and extraordinary Americans that have shaped our nation.

The woman, who is known to us as Harriet Tubman, was born in approxi-

mately 1822 in Dorchester County, MD, and given the name Araminta, Minty, Ross. She spent nearly 30 years of her life in slavery on Maryland's Eastern Shore. She worked on a number of different plantations on Maryland's Eastern Shore and as a teenager was trained to be a seamstress. As an adult she took the first name Harriet, and when she was 25 years-old married John Tubman.

In her late twenties, Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery in 1849. She fled in the dead of night, navigating the maze of tidal streams and wetlands that, to this day, comprise the Eastern Shore's landscape. She did so alone, demonstrating courage, strength and fortitude that became her hallmarks. Not satisfied with attaining her own freedom, she returned repeatedly for more than 10 years to the places of her enslavement in Dorchester and Caroline counties where, under the most adverse conditions, she led away many family members and other slaves to freedom in the Northeastern United States. She helped develop a complex network of safe houses and recruited abolitionist sympathizers residing along secret routes connecting the Southern slave states and Northern Free States. No one knows exactly how many people she led to freedom or the number of trips between the North and South she led, but the legend of her work was an inspiration to the multitude of slaves seeking freedom and to abolitionists fighting to end slavery. Tubman became known as "the Moses of her people" by African-Americans and white abolitionists alike. Tubman once proudly told Frederick Douglass that in all of her journeys she "never lost a single passenger." She was so effective that in 1856 there was a \$40,000 reward offered for her capture in the South. She is the most famous and most important conductor of the network of resistance known as the Underground Railroad.

During the Civil War, Tubman served the Union forces as a spy, a scout and a nurse. She served in Virginia, Florida, and South Carolina. She is credited with leading slaves from those slave states to freedom during those years as well.

Following the Civil War, and the emancipation of all black slaves, Tubman settled in Auburn, NY. There she was active in the women's suffrage movement, and she also established one of the first incorporated African-American homes for aged to care for the elderly. In 1903 she bequeathed the Tubman Home to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Auburn where it stands to this day. Harriet Tubman died in Auburn in 1913 and she is buried in the Fort Hill Cemetery. Fortunately many of the structures and landmarks in New York remain intact and in relatively good condition.

Only recently has the Park Service begun establishing units dedicated to the lives of African-Americans. Places like Booker T. Washington National

Monument on the campus of the Tuskegee University in Alabama, the George Washington Carver National Monument in Missouri, The Buffalo Soldiers at Guadalupe Mountains National Park, the National Historical Trail commemorating the March for Voting Rights from Selma to Montgomery Alabama, and most recently the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial on the National Mall are all important monuments and places of historical significance that help tell the story of the African-American experience.

As the National Park Service continues its important work to recognize and preserve African-American history by providing greater public access and information about the places and people that have shaped the African-American experience, there are very few units dedicated to the lives of African-American women, and there are no National Historical Parks commemorating African-American women.

I cannot think of a more fitting hero than Harriet Tubman to be the first African-American woman to be memorialized with National Historical Parks that tell both her personal story and her lifelong fight for justice and freedom starting with her fight against the cruel institution of slavery and work of the Underground Railroad she led to her work in the women's suffrage movement.

I am grateful for the support of my colleagues. These parks will hopefully pave the way for the Park Service to develop more National Historical Parks commemorating the lives of many other important African-American women in our history.

The vision for the Tubman National Historical Parks is to preserve the places significant to the life of Harriet Tubman and tell her story through interpretative activities and continue to discover aspects of her life and the experience of passage along the Underground Railroad through archaeological research and discovery.

The buildings and structures in Maryland have mostly disappeared. Slaves were forced to live in primitive buildings even though many slaves were skilled tradesmen who constructed the substantial homes of their owners. Not surprisingly, few of the structures associated with the early years of Tubman's life remain standing today. The landscape of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, however, is still evocative of the time that Tubman lived there. Farm fields and loblolly pine forests dot the lowland landscape, which is also notable for its extensive network of tidal rivers and wetlands that Tubman, and the people she guided to freedom, under the cover of night. In particular, a number of properties including the homestead of Ben Ross, her father, Stewart's Canal, where he worked, the Brodessa Farm, where she worked as a slave, and others are within the master plan boundaries of the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.