STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 125. A bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2020, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today I am proud to introduce the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2015. Once enacted, this legislation will continue for another five years the immensely successful grant program that provides matching funds for State and local law enforcement agencies to purchase protective vests for officers serving in the field.

Our Nation needs no additional reminders of the dangers faced by law enforcement officers each and every day. Far too often we have grieved as officers are killed in the line of duty. In 2014 alone, 126 men and women serving in law enforcement lost their lives. Although protective vests cannot save every officer, they have already saved the lives of more than 3,000 law enforcement officers since 1987. Vests dramatically increase the chance of survival when tragedy occurs. I have met personally with police officers who are living today because of a bulletproof vest, and they will attest to the fact that the vests provided through this program are worth every penny.

No officer should have to serve without a protective vest. Yet we know that, for far too many jurisdictions, vests can cost too much and wear out too soon. The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program helps to fill the gap. Since it was first authorized in 1999, it has enabled more than 13,000 State and local law enforcement agencies to purchase more than one million bulletproof vests, including more than 4,000 vests for officers in Vermont. As these officers have helped to protect our communities, these grants have helped to protect them. Unfortunately the authorization for this grant program lapsed in 2012. We must not delay any longer in reauthorizing this program

This bill also contains a number of improvements to the grant program. It provides incentives for agencies to provide uniquely fitted vests for female officers and others. It also codifies existing Justice Department policies that grantee law enforcement agencies cannot use other Federal grant funds to satisfy the matching fund requirement, and they must also have mandatory wear policies to ensure the vests are used regularly.

Protecting those who serve has historically been a bipartisan effort in Congress. Republican Senator Ben Nighthorse-Campbell and I worked together to create this program more than 15 years ago. It was so successful that, in the past, it was reauthorized with a voice vote. It was the right thing to do, it saved lives, and that was enough for both Democrats and Republicans. This is not a partisan issue, and I am pleased that Senator GRAHAM is the lead cosponsor of this measure. Senators COONS and BLUNT are also original cosponsors of this bill.

The law enforcement community speaks with a single voice on this issue. And I am proud that this bill is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Association of Police Organizations, National Sheriffs' Association, Major County Sheriffs' Association, Major Cities Chiefs Association, Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, National Tactical Officers Association, and Sergeants Benevolent Association.

There are very few bills that can so directly affect and improve the safety of those who serve and protect our communities. This program saves lives, and I am hopeful that all Senators—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike—will join us now to ensure its swift reauthorization.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 132. A bill to improve timber management on Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road grant land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I reintroduce a bill that will end the gridlock on the Oregon and California, O&C, lands found in my home State. I am pleased that my colleague Senator MERKLEY is joining me in this effort. Last Congress, I introduced this legislation, which went on to be reported out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee after continued work with stakeholders and resulting modifications. I feel that a great deal of progress was made in the last Congress to find a solution for these lands in Oregon, but Congress ran out of time to complete work on this bill. That's why I am back at it here today. The bill I introduce today is intended to advance the progress made, adopting the modifications from the bill that was reported out of Committee, and paving the way to pass legislation regarding management of these lands.

My legislation will end decades of uncertainty and broken forest policy with a science-driven solution that moves past the decades old timber wars. It does this by using science to guide management of the O&C lands while upholding bedrock federal environmental laws. This bill provides the jobs that Oregonians need, certainty of timber supply that timber companies require, and continued environmental protections that our treasures deserve.

First, my legislation divides the O&C lands, with roughly half set aside for forestry emphasis and the other half for conservation emphasis, to put a stop to the uncertainty and conflicting priorities that have contributed to federal management failure on these lands and produce wins on both sides of the historic timber conflict. The forestry emphasis lands will employ proven forestry practices, known as ''ecological forestry,'' to mimic natural processes and create healthier, more diverse forests. Modeling using Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service analysis confirms that ecological forestry will more than double the harvest on O&C lands, producing approximately 400 mmbf on the landscape covered by this bill.

On the conservation side, my bill provides permanent protections for approximately 1.35 million acres of land, while designating wilderness lands, wild and scenic rivers, and other special areas. It creates 87,000 acres of wilderness and 252 miles of wild and scenic rivers. All told, this would be the single biggest increase in Oregon's conservation lands in decades. That includes special areas protected for recreation, which is an increasingly important part of our rural economy, and is responsible for 141,000 jobs in Oregon alone. Perhaps the most important conservation win in the bill is the first-ever legislative protection for old growth on O&C lands and the designation of Late Successional Old-growth Forest Heritage Reserves.

The approach of dividing the lands into conservation and timber emphasis and protecting old growth will provide clear management direction for the landscape and take the most controversial harvests off the table. Significantly, the bill streamlines and front loads environmental analysis into two large scale environmental impact statements—one each for moist and dry forests—that will study 5 years of work in the woods, rather than a single project. It does this while upholding the Endangered Species Act and other bedrock environmental laws.

Critical to the bill is the belief that forest policy should be dictated by science, not lawyers. The forestry principles used in this bill are based on the work of Drs. Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin, two respected Northwest forestry scientists, and built off of forestry approaches used around the globe. The bill also establishes the first ever legislative protections for O&C streams thanks in large part to the work of one of the Northwest's foremost water resources experts, Dr. Gordon Reeves. The Northwest Forest Plan's stream protections are extended to key watersheds and four drinking water emphasis areas, with additional lands designated for conservation, to protect drinking water. Science also guides how the agency can treat trees near streams and a scientific committee will evaluate stream buffers and reserves in areas dedicated to timber harvests, increasing or decreasing the boundaries as needed to address the ecological importance of streams. This

acknowledges that one size does not fit all.

Most important is the fact that I will continue to advance efforts to secure a new future for the O&C lands. My bill certainly doesn't provide everything all sides want, but it can get everyone what they need. I look forward to working with Congressmen DEFAZIO, WALDEN and SCHRADER and our colleagues in the Senate and House of Representatives to pass an O&C solution into law.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 133. A bill to approve and implement the Klamath Basin agreements, to improve natural resource management, support economic development, and sustain agricultural production in the Klamath River Basin in the public interest and the interest of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I rise to reintroduce a bill that would authorize the implementation of three landmark agreements that settle some of our country's most complex and contentious water allocation and species preservation issues. Water management crises this century have plagued the Klamath Basin, leading to devastating water years for communities throughout the Basin. Overcoming that adversity, stakeholders including State and Federal agencies, tribes, farmers and ranchers, and environmental groups, have spent years coming together to hammer out solutions. They swallowed hard and worked together to bring costs down and deliver economic certainty and stability for the Basin in the name of the greater good.

Last year, I introduced the Klamath Basin Water Recovery and Economic Restoration Act of 2014 to finally authorize the three historic agreements reached by Basin partners—the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement, the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement, and the Upper Basin Agreement. I was deeply disappointed that the bill did not get passed into law last Congress, delaying the implementation of these important agreements and creating even more uncertainty and anxiety for stakeholders in the Basin.

Inspired by the perseverance and dedication demonstrated by the stakeholders, today I once again bring forward this bill, the Klamath Basin Water Recovery and Economic Restoration Act of 2015, to put a rubber stamp on the historic agreements and finally help heal the Klamath Basin. With this bill, the Basin will no longer be known for persistent drought, water disputes, and conflict, but rather for the dedicated and enduring collaborative efforts that have honed in on a sustainable and more economically certain future; an example that other regions can emulate for their watershed challenges. I continue to express my gratitude to the interested groups who came to the table and formed partnerships, engaged in conversations, made agreements and concessions, and ultimately found a path forward.

I'm pleased to be joined by my colleagues Senators MERKLEY, BOXER and FEINSTEIN on this bill. Senator MERKLEY has worked tirelessly to encourage and support the years of conversations and collaborative efforts of the countless stakeholders who have committed to finding a balanced solution. Senators BOXER and FEINSTEIN have provided unwavering support for the communities impacted by unprecedented drought in the Klamath Basin, which spans Oregon and California, while also reaffirming the need to support fish and wildlife. Together, we are committed to working with our colleagues in the Senate and House to advance this bill and get it signed by the President.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. PAUL):

S. 134. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp from the definition of marihuana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I am pleased to be joined by Senators MERKLEY, MCCONNELL, and PAUL in introducing the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2015.

I introduced this bill during the 113th Congress with these same colleagues to amend a regulation that is holding America's economy back. I am committed to empowering American farmers and increasing domestic economic activity, and that is exactly what this bill will do.

The United States is the world's largest consumer of hemp products, yet it remains the only major industrialized country that bans hemp farming. As the United States imports millions of dollars of hemp products, such as textiles, foods, paper products and construction materials, American farmers who could grow hemp right here at home are unable to profit from this growing market. This is an outrageous restriction on free enterprise and does nothing but hurt economic growth and job creation.

The Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2015 would amend the definition of ''marihuana'' in the Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp, allowing American farmers to produce domestically the hemp we already use. Industrial hemp is a safe, profitable commodity in many other countries, and I've long said that if you can buy it at the local supermarket, American farmers should be able to grow it. This commonsense bill would end the burdensome restrictions on industrial hemp and is pro-environment, pro-business, and pro-farmer.

I encourage my colleagues to take the time to learn about the great potential for farming industrial hemp in the United States, and to understand the real differences between industrial hemp and marijuana. Under our bill, industrial hemp is defined as having extremely low THC levels: it has to be 0.3 percent or less. The lowest commercial grade marijuana typically has 5 percent THC content. The bottom line is that no one is going to get high on industrial hemp. And to guarantee that won't be the case, our legislation allows the U.S. Attorney General to take action if a state law allows commercial hemp to exceed the maximum 0.3 percent THC level.

I urge my colleagues to join Senators MERKLEY, MCCONNELL, PAUL, and me by cosponsoring and ultimately passing this important bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 134

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. EXCLUSION OF INDUSTRIAL HEMP FROM DEFINITION OF MARIHUANA.

Section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (16)—

(A) by striking ''(16) The'' and inserting ''(16)(A) The''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) The term 'marihuana' does not include industrial hemp.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(57) The term 'industrial hemp' means the plant Cannabis sativa L. and any part of such plant, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.''.

SEC. 3. INDUSTRIAL HEMP DETERMINATION BY STATES.

Section 201 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 811) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(i) INDUSTRIAL HEMP DETERMINATION.—If a person grows or processes Cannabis sativa L. for purposes of making industrial hemp in accordance with State law, the Cannabis sativa L. shall be deemed to meet the concentration limitation under section 102(57), unless the Attorney General determines that the State law is not reasonably calculated to comply with section 102(57).''.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 135. A bill to prohibit Federal agencies from mandating the deployment of vulnerabilities in data security technologies; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing legislation that I introduced at the end of the last Congress along with a bipartisan group of colleagues in the House of Representatives. We call it the Secure Data Act, because it is designed to help protect the sensitive data of American citizens

and businesses from being compromised by foreign hackers. And I believe it will also help protect and promote the American digital economy at a time when growing the number of family-wage jobs is so important both to Oregonians and to people across the country.

Hardly a week goes by without a new report of a massive data theft by computer hackers, often involving trade secrets, consumers' financial information, or sensitive government records. It is well known that the best defense against these attacks is strong data encryption and more secure technology systems.

This is why I and many others have been troubled by suggestions from senior officials that computer hardware and software manufacturers should be required to intentionally create security holes, often referred to as back doors, to enable the government to access data on every American's cell phone and computer, even if that data is protected by strong encryption. The problem with this proposal is that there is no such thing as a magic key that can only be used by good people for worthwhile reasons. There is only strong security or weak security.

Americans are rightly demanding stronger security for their personal data. And requiring companies to build back doors into their products would mean deliberately creating weaknesses that hackers and unscrupulous foreign governments could exploit. The results of this approach can be seen elsewhere—in 2005, citizens of Greece discovered that dozens of their senior government officials' phones had been under surveillance for nearly a year. The eavesdropper was never identified, but the vulnerability was—it was built-in wiretapping features intended to be accessible only to government agencies following a legal process.

Mandating back doors would also remove incentives for innovation. If you're required to build a wall with a hole in it, you aren't going to invest a lot of money in developing better locks. And these mandates could also do enormous harm to U.S. technology companies that are working hard to overcome the damage that has been done by recklessly broad surveillance policies and years of deceptive statements by senior government officials.

This legislation would expressly prohibit the government from mandating that tech companies build security weaknesses into their products. I would note that similar legislation from Representatives MASSIE and LOFGREN passed the House of Representatives on a bipartisan vote of 293–123 in June of last year. So, I look forward to working with colleagues on a bipartisan basis to advance this bill, and to receiving feedback and input from colleagues and interested stakeholders, so that it can be further improved as it moves forward.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 135

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Secure Data Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON DATA SECURITY VULNERABILITY MANDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), no agency may mandate that a manufacturer, developer, or seller of covered products design or alter the security functions in its product or service to allow the surveillance of any user of such product or service, or to allow the physical search of such product, by any agency.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to mandates authorized under the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (47 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.).

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''agency'' has the meaning given the term in section 3502 of title 44, United States Code; and

(2) the term ''covered product'' means any computer hardware, computer software, or electronic device that is made available to the general public.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 136. A bill to amend chapter 21 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that fathers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans shall be included with mothers of such veterans as preference eligibles for treatment in the civil service; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, our country has asked a lot of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines throughout its history and it will continue to do so as long as the world looks to America for leadership in crises. These brave men and women don't join the military looking for public accolades and all they ask in return for their many sacrifices is for the government to honor its commitments to them—something I have certainly always tried to do.

Of course our men and women in uniform and our veterans aren't the only folks who make sacrifices in the name of national security. From child care, to household repairs and bills, to legal issues, our military families are called on to provide support in innumerable ways as their loved ones serve and deploy. While we hope and pray that all those sent abroad return safely to the arms of their loved ones, we know that this isn't always the case. When servicemembers return home wounded or weakened as a result of combat, it is our military families who step up to take care of their son or daughter, husband or wife. When servicesmembers do not return, it is our military families who endure that searing pain that comes with such a terrible loss.

It is an understatement to say that government cannot take away that pain; but what government can, and must, do is honor that sacrifice. One way we do that is by extending certain benefits to the families of those who are killed or permanently and totally disabled in action. Today, along with Senator BROWN, I am introducing the Gold Star Fathers Act to update one of those benefits.

The Office of Personnel Management currently allows unmarried mothers of fallen soldiers to claim a 10-point veterans' preference when applying for Federal jobs. Our legislation would simply extend this preference to unmarried fathers of fallen soldiers. Updating this preference is about fairness and recognizing that fathers, too, share in the sacrifice that their family has made for this country. Updating this preference will also expand opportunities for Gold Star families to bring their dedication and compassion into the federal government, where it can be put to great use.

Gold Star Mothers and Gold Star Fathers have incurred a debt that Congress cannot ever hope to repay. All we can hope to do is ensure that these sacrifices are acknowledged and honored. It is my hope that the Senate will pass this legislation swiftly.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 136

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Gold Star Fathers Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PREFERENCE ELIGIBLE TREATMENT FOR FATHERS OF CERTAIN PERMANENTLY DISABLED OR DECEASED VETERANS.

Section 2108(3) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraphs (F) and (G) and inserting the following:

''(F) the parent of an individual who lost his or her life under honorable conditions while serving in the armed forces during a period named by paragraph (1)(A) of this section, if—

''(i) the spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or

''(ii) that parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from his or her spouse;

''(G) the parent of a service-connected permanently and totally disabled veteran, if—

''(i) the spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or

''(ii) that parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from his or her spouse; and''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendment made by this Act shall take effect 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 137. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to regulate tax return preparers; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, if you go to get your hair cut, your barber or

stylist must be licensed. If you need to get the locks on your home repaired or replaced, the locksmith needs a license. But if you have someone prepare your tax return, there is no requirement that the preparer meet any minimum competency standard. It is time for that to change so taxpayers are protected when they file their taxes.

On April 8 of last year, the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing to discuss ways to protect taxpayers from incompetent, unethical and fraudulent tax return preparers. There is no question the tax code is overly complex and confusing. For that reason among others, more than 80 million Americans pay someone else to prepare their income tax return each year.

That's why it was so alarming to learn that most paid tax return preparers don't have to meet even basic standards of proficiency or competence to prepare someone else's tax return.

A series of investigations by the GAO and Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, TIGTA, illustrated some of the problems with incompetent tax return preparers. As a consequence, the IRS took steps to require paid tax return preparers to demonstrate they have the know-how to provide the taxpayer with a service he or she can reasonably rely upon.

I am proud to say my home state gets this issue right. Tax preparers in Oregon study, pass an exam and keep up with the changing landscape of the tax code in order to maintain their licenses, and those standards work. The GAO took a look at the system a few years ago and found that tax returns from Oregon were 72 percent likelier to be accurate than returns from the rest of the country. That puts fewer Oregonians at the mercy of unscrupulous preparers and reduces the risk of the dreaded audit.

These independent analyses, combined with too many taxpayer horror stories of identity theft, refund and liability errors, and audit challenges, demonstrated clearly that a lack of basic tax return preparer competency standards is a serious consumer protection issue. Today, I am introducing legislation that will help restore standards to protect American taxpayers.

This legislation, the Taxpayer Protection and Preparer Proficiency Act of 2015, which I am pleased to introduce with the distinguished Senator from Maryland, Mr. CARDIN—will grant the IRS the ability to move forward with the type of education and examination program contemplated under the 2011 Circular 230 program, specifically, the Registered Tax Return Preparer, RTRP, Program.

Testing and minimum competency requirements have been clearly shown to be effective at reducing error, fraud and tax preparer incompetence.

We need to protect American taxpayers, and this bill helps do just that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 137

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Taxpayer Protection and Preparer Proficiency Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REGULATION OF TAX RETURN PREPARERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 330 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) regulate—

''(A) the practice of representatives of persons before the Department of the Treasury; and

''(B) the practice of tax return preparers; and'', and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting ''or tax return preparer'' after ''representative'' each place it appears, and

(B) by inserting ''or in preparing their tax returns, claims for refund, or documents in connection with tax returns or claims for refund'' after ''cases'' in subparagraph (D).

(b) AUTHORITY TO SANCTION REGULATED TAX RETURN PREPARERS.—Subsection (b) of section 330 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''before the Department'',

(2) by inserting ''or tax return preparer'' after ''representative'' each place it appears, and

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking ''misleads or threatens'' and all that follows and inserting ''misleads or threatens—

''(A) any person being represented or any prospective person being represented; or

''(B) any person or prospective person whose tax return, claim for refund, or document in connection with a tax return or claim for refund, is being or may be prepared.''.

(c) TAX RETURN PREPARER DEFINED.—Section 330 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) TAX RETURN PREPARER.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'tax return preparer' has the meaning given such term under section 7701(a)(36) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''(2) TAX RETURN.—The term 'tax return' has the meaning given to the term 'return' under section 6696(e)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''(3) CLAIM FOR REFUND.—The term 'claim for refund' has the meaning given such term under section 6696(e)(2) of such Code.''.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 138. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax incentive to individuals teaching in elementary and secondary schools located in rural or high unemployment areas and to individuals who achieve certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today, I am introducing the Incentives to Educate American Children, the ''I Teach'' Act, which would provide a $1,000 refundable tax credit to elementary and secondary school teachers who teach in schools located in rural or impoverished areas. It would also provide a $1,000 credit to teachers who achieve National Board certification, and provide National Board certified teachers serving in rural or impoverished schools a $2,000 credit. It was previously introduced in the 113th Congress by Senator Rockefeller.

U.S. classrooms are increasingly filled with less experienced teachers, as older teachers retire and the retention rate among young teachers continues to decline. According to the most recent data, 1.7 million teachers, representing 45 percent of the workforce, had less than 10 years of experience. Policy makers need to take steps to ensure that students have the most qualified and best trained teachers possible.

Nearly a third of public schools in the United States are in rural areas. And rural schools often face challenges that others don't, like smaller tax bases and higher recruitment costs, which means they often have less money for classroom materials and salaries. Department of Education data show that rural school districts have the lowest base salaries for starting teachers, a trend that continues even as teachers move to the top of the local salary range. Rural schools face these challenges across the country.

The most recent study by the Education Trust found that high schools with high poverty rates are twice as likely to have teachers who are not certified in their fields than high schools with low poverty rates. The same study found that schools serving impoverished areas have a higher percentage of first year teachers. Rural schools face similar problems.

According to the Department of Education, Oregon faces a shortage of certified teachers for the 2014–15 school year in subject areas such as math, science, Spanish, special education, English as a second language, and bilingual education. A major deterrent to pursuing a master's degree in teaching is the soaring cost of tuition, which, especially for those candidates with strong science and math backgrounds, drives them into other fields instead of educating the next generation of scientists and researchers.

In other words, due to the high cost of education and teachers' salaries which have failed to keep pace, additional incentives through the tax code could encourage highly qualified individuals to look to or continue to pursue teaching as a viable profession. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 138

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Incentives to Educate American Children Act of 2015'' or the ''I Teach Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REFUNDABLE TAX CREDIT FOR INDIVIDUALS TEACHING IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS LOCATED IN HIGH POVERTY OR RURAL AREAS AND CERTIFIED TEACHERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 36B the following new section:

''SEC. 36C. TAX CREDIT FOR INDIVIDUALS TEACHING IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS LOCATED IN HIGH POVERTY OR RURAL AREAS AND CERTIFIED TEACHERS.

''(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—In the case of an eligible teacher, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this subtitle for the taxable year an amount equal to the applicable amount for the eligible academic year ending during such taxable year.

''(b) APPLICABLE AMOUNT.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS OR SCHOOLS WITH HIGH POVERTY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an eligible teacher who performs services in a public kindergarten or a public elementary or secondary school described in subparagraph (B) during the eligible academic year, the applicable amount is $1,000.

''(B) SCHOOL DESCRIBED.—A public kindergarten or a public elementary or secondary school is described in this subparagraph if—

''(i) at least 75 percent of the students attending such kindergarten or school receive free or reduced-cost lunches under the school lunch program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, or

''(ii) such kindergarten or school has a School Locale Code of 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the Secretary of Education.

''(2) CERTIFIED TEACHERS.—In the case of an eligible teacher who is certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for the eligible academic year, the applicable amount is $1,000.

''(3) CERTIFIED TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS OR SCHOOLS WITH HIGH POVERTY.—In the case of an eligible teacher described in both paragraphs (1) and (2), the applicable amount is $2,000.

''(c) ELIGIBLE TEACHER.—For purposes of this section, the term 'eligible teacher' means, for any eligible academic year, an individual who is a kindergarten through grade 12 classroom teacher or instructor in a public kindergarten or a public elementary or secondary school on a full-time basis for such eligible academic year.

''(d) ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.—The terms 'elementary school' and 'secondary school' have the respective meanings given such terms by section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

''(2) ELIGIBLE ACADEMIC YEAR.—The term 'eligible academic year' means any academic year ending in a taxable year beginning after December 31, 2015.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Paragraph (2) of section 1324(b) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting '', 36C'' after ''36B''.

(2) The table of sections for subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 36B the following new item:

''Sec. 36C. Tax credit for individuals teaching in elementary and secondary schools located in high poverty or rural areas and certified teachers.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to academic years ending in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 139. A bill to permanently allow an exclusion under the Supplemental Security Income program and the Medicaid program for compensation provided to individuals who participate in clinical trials for rare diseases or conditions; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the bipartisan Ensuring Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2015. I would like to begin by thanking Senators HATCH and MARKEY for joining me in cosponsoring this legislation. I would also like to thank the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for working with me on this important issue since 2010.

This bill is simple: it would remove a sunset that exists for a law we passed in 2010 making it easier—and more likely—for people receiving Supplemental Security Income and Medicaid to participate in rare disease clinical trials. As I explained in 2010, we wanted to proceed carefully when altering how compensation for participating in clinical trials is treated for SSI and Medicaid purposes. That is why we included a 5 year sunset and asked GAO to report on how the law is working. Five years have passed and GAO has issued its report.

GAO's frank assessment is that not a lot is known about how the law may or may not have affected the decisions an SSI recipient makes about participating in clinical trials. At the same time, GAO provided important context about factors affecting a decision to participate, such as time and travel. The GAO report suggests that the law has removed a barrier to participation for the individuals that rely on SSI and Medicaid's safety net, and GAO's consultation with the National Institutes of Health, the National Organization of Rare Diseases, and the Social Security Administration did not identify any negative aspects from the change in the law.

That is comforting and important, and it is reason enough to make this law permanent. We all know what's at stake and how it's often difficult to find participants for rare disease clinical trials. This law has helped increase the number of people who can participate and, hopefully, be a part of the effort to improve treatments and find cures.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation so that recipients of SSI and Medicaid can have the same opportunity to participate in clinical trials as individuals who do not rely on these important safety net programs. I look forward to working with my colleagues on passing this bill soon.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 139

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Ensuring Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF SUNSET PROVISION.

Effective as if included in the enactment of the Improving Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–255, 124 Stat. 2640), section 3 of that Act is amended by striking subsection (e).

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 140. A bill to combat human trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to re-introduce, along with Senator PORTMAN, the Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015.

Human trafficking is estimated to be a $32 billion criminal enterprise, making it the second largest criminal industry in the world, behind the drug trade. Many steps need to be taken to combat this problem. But we cannot escape this simple truth: without demand for the services performed by trafficking victims, the problem would not exist.

The bill we are introducing today would reduce the demand for human trafficking, particularly the commercial sexual exploitation of children, by holding buyers accountable and making it easier for law enforcement to investigate and prosecute all persons who participate in sex trafficking.

Sex trafficking is not a victimless crime. In the United States, the average age that a person is first trafficked is between 12 and 14. Many of these children continue to be exploited into adulthood. A study of women and girls involved in street prostitution in my hometown of San Francisco found that 82 percent had been physically assaulted, 83 percent were threatened with a weapon, and 68 percent were raped. The overwhelming majority of sex trafficking victims in the United States are American citizens—83 percent by one estimate from the Department of Justice.

I am encouraged that Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies are taking steps to combat human trafficking. Between January and June of last year, the Federal Bureau of Investigation recovered 168 trafficking victims and arrested 281 sex traffickers in ''Operation Cross Country.''

I commend these efforts, but more needs to be done to target the perpetrators who are fueling demand for trafficking crimes—the buyers of sex acts from trafficking victims. Many buyers of sex are ''hobbyists'' who purchase sex repeatedly. Because buyers are rarely arrested, much less prosecuted, the demand for commercial sex continues unabated.

Without buyers, sex trafficking would cease to exist. As Luis CdeBaca, the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, noted, ''[n]o girl or woman would be a victim of sex trafficking if there were no profits to be made from their exploitation.''

The Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015 would address this problem by incentivizing Federal and State law enforcement officers to target buyers and providing new authorities to prosecute all who engage in the crime of sex trafficking.

First, the bill would clarify that buyers of sex acts from trafficking victims can be prosecuted under the Federal commercial sex trafficking statute. This provision would codify the Eighth Circuit's decision in United States v. Jungers, which held that this statute encompasses buyers, in addition to sellers. Despite this favorable ruling, there is no guarantee that other courts will follow this precedent.

Second, the bill would hold buyers and sellers of child sex acts accountable for their actions, even if they claim they were unaware of the age of a minor victim. At times, it can be difficult for a prosecutor to prove that a buyer was aware of the victim's age. Successful cases can require the child victim to testify to this fact, subjecting the victim to re-traumatization. The bill would draw a clear line: if you purchase sex from an underage child, you can be prosecuted. Period.

Third, the bill would grant judges greater flexibility to impose an appropriate term of supervised release on sex traffickers. Current law contains an anomaly: a person convicted of violating the commercial sex trafficking statute or attempting to violate the statute may be subject to a longer term of supervised release than a person who is convicted of conspiring to violate the statute. Conspiring to traffic underage children is as serious as attempting to commit this crime and should be punished the same.

Fourth, the bill would require the Bureau of Justice Statistics to prepare annual reports on the number of arrests, prosecutions, and convictions of sex traffickers and buyers of sex from trafficked victims in the state court system. Very little data is available on the prosecutions made under anti-trafficking laws. This provision would provide additional data and encourage State and local governments to increase enforcement against sellers and buyers of sex from trafficked victims.

Fifth, the Combat Human Trafficking Act would strengthen training programs operated by the Department of Justice for Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers who investigate and prosecute sex trafficking offenses. Under the bill, such training programs must include components on effective methods to target and prosecute the buyers of sex acts from trafficked victims. This would equip prosecutors with the tools they need to target buyers, encouraging prosecution of these perpetrators. Training programs must also train law enforcement in connecting trafficking victims with health care providers, so that victims receive the health care services they need to recover.

In addition, the bill requires that training programs for federal prosecutors include components on seeking restitution for victims of sex trafficking. An October 2014 study by The Human Trafficking Pro Bono Legal Center found that federal prosecutors did not seek restitution in 37 percent of qualifying human trafficking cases brought between 2009 and 2012, even though restitution for trafficking victims is mandatory under federal law. When the prosecutor did not seek restitution, it was granted in only 10 percent of cases.

These results make clear that prosecutors play a critical role in providing justice for trafficking victims. Our bill would ensure that prosecutors are specifically trained to seek restitution for victims.

The bill would also require the Federal Judicial Center to provide training to judges on ordering restitution for human trafficking victims, so that judges are fully aware that federal law mandates that restitution be ordered for these victims. Overall, restitution was awarded in only 36 percent of qualifying human trafficking cases brought between 2009 and 2012, according to The Human Trafficking Pro Bono Legal Center's study. Too many trafficking victims are not receiving the compensation they need to rebuild their lives and to which they are entitled under the law.

Sixth, the bill would authorize federal and state officials to seek a wiretap to investigate and prosecute any human trafficking-related offense. Under current law, a federal law enforcement officer may seek a wiretap in an investigation under the commercial sex trafficking statute, but not under a number of other statutes that address human trafficking-related offenses, such as forced labor and involuntary servitude. Similarly, a state law enforcement officer may seek a wiretap to investigate a kidnapping offense, but not an offense for human trafficking, child sexual exploitation, or child pornography production. Our bill would fix those omissions.

Finally, this legislation would strengthen the rights of crime victims. The bill would amend the Crime Victims' Rights Act to provide victims with the right to be informed in a timely manner of any plea agreement or deferred prosecution agreement. The exclusion of victims in these early stages of a criminal case profoundly impairs victims' rights because, by the nature of these events, there often is no later proceeding in which victims can exercise their rights.

The bill would also ensure that crime victims have access to appellate review when their rights are denied in the lower court. Regrettably, six appellate courts have mis-applied the Crime Victims' Rights Act by imposing an especially high standard for reviewing appeals by victims, requiring them to show ''clear and indisputable error''. Three other circuits have applied the correct standard: the ordinary appellate standard of legal error or abuse of discretion. This bill resolves the issue, setting a uniform standard for victims in all circuits by codifying the more victim-protecting rule, that the appellate court ''shall apply ordinary standards of appellate review.''

I am pleased that this bill has the support of numerous law enforcement and anti-trafficking organizations: the Fraternal Order of Police, Shared Hope International, ECPAT-USA, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, CATW, Human Rights Project for Girls, Survivors for Solutions, Sanctuary For Families, World Hope International, Prostitution Research & Education, MISSSEY, Breaking Free, Equality Now, National Organization for Victim Assistance, Seraphim Global, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, City of Oakland, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, and Casa Cornelia Law Center. These groups are on the forefront in the fight against sex trafficking, and I am proud to have their support.

Many of the provisions in the Combat Human Trafficking Act were included in the substitute amendment to the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act, S. 2646, 113th Congress, which passed the Senate Judiciary Committee last September. However, that bill was not enacted into law before Congress adjourned. I am hopeful that we can pass the bipartisan Combat Human Trafficking in this Congress.

I urge my colleagues to join me and Senator PORTMAN in supporting this bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 140

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REDUCING DEMAND FOR SEX TRAFFICKING; LOWER MENS REA FOR SEX TRAFFICKING OF UNDERAGE VICTIMS.

(a) CLARIFICATION OF RANGE OF CONDUCT PUNISHED AS SEX TRAFFICKING.—Section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''or maintains'' and inserting ''maintains, patronizes, or solicits'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''or obtained'' and inserting ''obtained, patronized, or solicited''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''or obtained'' and inserting ''obtained, patronized, or solicited''; and

(3) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) In a prosecution under subsection (a)(1), the Government need not prove that the defendant knew, or recklessly disregarded the fact, that the person recruited, enticed, harbored, transported, provided, obtained, maintained, patronized, or solicited had not attained the age of 18 years.''.

(b) DEFINITION AMENDED.—Section 103(10) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)) is amended by striking ''or obtaining'' and inserting ''obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting''.

(c) MINIMUM PERIOD OF SUPERVISED RELEASE FOR CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT COMMERCIAL CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING.—Section 3583(k) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''1594(c),'' after ''1591,''.

SEC. 3. BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS REPORT ON STATE ENFORCEMENT OF SEX TRAFFICKING PROHIBITIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the terms ''commercial sex act'', ''severe forms of trafficking in persons'', ''State'', and ''Task Force'' have the meanings given those terms in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102);

(2) the term ''covered offense'' means the provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a commercial sex act involving a person subject to severe forms of trafficking in persons; and

(3) the term ''State law enforcement officer'' means any officer, agent, or employee of a State authorized by law or by a State government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal law.

(b) REPORT.—The Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics shall—

(1) prepare an annual report on—

(A) the rates of—

(i) arrest of individuals by State law enforcement officers for a covered offense;

(ii) prosecution (including specific charges) of individuals in State court systems for a covered offense; and

(iii) conviction of individuals in State court systems for a covered offense; and

(B) sentences imposed on individuals convicted in State court systems for a covered offense; and

(2) submit the annual report prepared under paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives;

(B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(C) the Task Force;

(D) the Senior Policy Operating Group established under section 105(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(g)); and

(E) the Attorney General.

SEC. 4. LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, PROSECUTORS, AND JUDGES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the terms ''commercial sex act'', ''severe forms of trafficking in persons'', and ''State'' have the meanings given those terms in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102);

(2) the term ''covered offender'' means an individual who obtains, patronizes, or solicits a commercial sex act involving a person subject to severe forms of trafficking in persons;

(3) the term ''Federal law enforcement officer'' has the meaning given the term in section 115 of title 18, United States Code;

(4) the term ''local law enforcement officer'' means any officer, agent, or employee of a unit of local government authorized by law or by a local government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal law; and

(5) the term ''State law enforcement officer'' means any officer, agent, or employee of a State authorized by law or by a State government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal law.

(b) TRAINING.—

(1) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.—The Attorney General shall ensure that each anti-human trafficking program operated by the Department of Justice, including each anti-human trafficking training program for Federal, State, or local law enforcement officers, includes technical training on—

(A) effective methods for investigating and prosecuting covered offenders; and

(B) facilitating the provision of physical and mental health services by health care providers to persons subject to severe forms of trafficking in persons.

(2) FEDERAL PROSECUTORS.—The Attorney General shall ensure that each anti-human trafficking program operated by the Department of Justice for United States attorneys or other Federal prosecutors includes training on seeking restitution for offenses under chapter 77 of title 18, United States Code, to ensure that each United States attorney or other Federal prosecutor, upon obtaining a conviction for such an offense, requests a specific amount of restitution for each victim of the offense without regard to whether the victim requests restitution.

(3) JUDGES.—The Federal Judicial Center shall provide training to judges relating to the application of section 1593 of title 18, United States Code, with respect to ordering restitution for victims of offenses under chapter 77 of such title.

(c) POLICY FOR FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.—The Attorney General shall ensure that Federal law enforcement officers are engaged in activities, programs, or operations involving the detection, investigation, and prosecution of covered offenders.

SEC. 5. WIRETAP AUTHORITY FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING VIOLATIONS.

Section 2516 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(c)—

(A) by inserting before ''section 1591'' the following: ''section 1581 (peonage), section 1584 (involuntary servitude), section 1589 (forced labor), section 1590 (trafficking with respect to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor),''; and

(B) by inserting before ''section 1751'' the following: ''section 1592 (unlawful conduct with respect to documents in furtherance of trafficking, peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor),''; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''human trafficking, child sexual exploitation, child pornography production,'' after ''kidnapping,''.

SEC. 6. STRENGTHENING CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS.

(a) NOTIFICATION OF PLEA AGREEMENT OR OTHER AGREEMENT.—Section 3771(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(9) The right to be informed in a timely manner of any plea agreement or deferred prosecution agreement.''.

(b) APPELLATE REVIEW OF PETITIONS RELATING TO CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3771(d)(3) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the fifth sentence the following: ''In deciding such application, the court of appeals shall apply ordinary standards of appellate review.''.

(2) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to any petition for a writ of mandamus filed under section 3771(d)(3) of title 18, United States Code, that is pending on the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BURR, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 141. A bill to repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 141

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting Seniors' Access to Medicare Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF THE INDEPENDENT PAYMENT ADVISORY BOARD.

Effective as of the enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148), sections 3403 and 10320 of such Act (including the amendments made by such sections) are repealed, and any provision of law amended by such sections is hereby restored as if such sections had not been enacted into law.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 142. A bill to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a rule to require child safety packaging for liquid nicotine containers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, we all recognize the danger that many hazardous chemicals and over-the-counter drugs pose to children. That's why we require child-resistant packaging for these substances to prevent accidental poisonings that could result in serious injury or death.

Unfortunately, there is no child-resistant packaging required for concentrated liquid nicotine, which can be toxic if ingested or even absorbed through the skin. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, AAP, some of these small bottles of liquid nicotine contain a concentrated and deadly amount of the substance. The AAP notes that this small bottle contains enough nicotine to kill four small children. Just a few drops of the liquid

splashed on a child's skin can make the child very ill.

The American Association of Poison Control Centers reports that poison control centers received 3,957 calls in 2014 related to liquid nicotine exposure. This is more than twice as many calls as in 2013, when AAPCC reported 1,543 calls related to liquid nicotine exposure.

Sadly, it was only a matter of time before one of these accidental nicotine poisonings resulted in death. This past December, a 1-year-old boy in New York State died after ingesting liquid nicotine in his home.

We have to do more to protect children from deadly accidents like this.

Today I am reintroducing the Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act with Senators AYOTTE, BENNET, BLUMENTHAL, BOXER, BROWN, DURBIN, GILLIBRAND, KLOBUCHAR, MARKEY, MERKLEY, REED, SCHATZ, and SCHUMER to prevent these unnecessary tragedies. This common-sense legislation gives the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, CPSC, authority and direction to issue rules requiring safer, child-resistant packaging for liquid nicotine products within 1 year of passage.

The CPSC already requires child-resistant packaging for many household products, including over-the-counter medicines and cleaning agents. These rules have prevented countless injuries and deaths to children. There is no reason why bottles of liquid nicotine should not be required to have child-resistant packaging as well.

I invite my colleagues to join us to support the Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act. Last Congress, this legislation was reported out of the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee by voice vote. Continuing our work together this Congress, we can pass this bipartisan legislation and help prevent accidental child nicotine poisonings.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 142

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. CHILD SAFETY PACKAGING FOR LIQUID NICOTINE CONTAINERS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

(2) LIQUID NICOTINE CONTAINER.—The term ''liquid nicotine container'' means a consumer product, as defined in section 3(a)(5) of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2052(a)(5)) notwithstanding subparagraph (B) of such section, that consists of a container that—

(A) has an opening from which nicotine in a solution or other form is accessible and can flow freely through normal and foreseeable use by a consumer; and

(B) is used to hold soluble nicotine in any concentration.

(3) NICOTINE.—The term ''nicotine'' means any form of the chemical nicotine, including any salt or complex, regardless of whether the chemical is naturally or synthetically derived.

(4) SPECIAL PACKAGING.—The term ''special packaging'' has the meaning given such term in section 2 of the Poison Prevention Packaging Act of 1970 (15 U.S.C. 1471).

(b) REQUIRED USE OF SPECIAL PACKAGING FOR LIQUID NICOTINE CONTAINERS.—

(1) RULEMAKING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 3(a)(5)(B) of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2052(a)(5)(B)) or section 2(f)(2) of the Federal Hazardous Substances Act (15 U.S.C. 1261(f)(2)), not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall promulgate a rule requiring special packaging for liquid nicotine containers.

(B) AMENDMENTS.—The Commission may promulgate such amendments to the rule promulgated under subparagraph (A) as the Commission considers appropriate.

(2) EXPEDITED PROCESS.—The Commission shall promulgate the rules under paragraph (1) in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN RULEMAKING REQUIREMENTS.—The following provisions shall not apply to a rulemaking under paragraph (1):

(A) Sections 7 and 9 of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2056 and 2058).

(B) Section 3 of the Federal Hazardous Substances Act (15 U.S.C. 1262).

(C) Subsections (b) and (c) of section 3 of the Poison Prevention Packaging Act of 1970 (15 U.S.C. 1472).

(4) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or diminish the authority of the Food and Drug Administration to regulate the manufacture, marketing, sale, or distribution of liquid nicotine, liquid nicotine containers, electronic cigarettes, or similar products that contain or dispense liquid nicotine.

(5) ENFORCEMENT.—A rule promulgated under paragraph (1) shall be treated as a standard applicable to a household substance established under section 3(a) of the Poison Prevention Packaging Act of 1970 (15 U.S.C. 1472(a)).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 23—MAKING MAJORITY PARTY APPOINTMENTS FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS

Mr. MCCONNELL submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 23

Resolved, That the following be the majority membership on the following committees for the remainder of the 114th Congress, or until their successors are appointed:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY: Mr. Roberts (Chairman), Mr. Cochran, Mr. McConnell, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Hoeven, Mr. Perdue, Mrs. Ernst, Mr. Tillis, Mr. Sasse, Mr. Grassley, Mr. Thune.

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS: Mr. Cochran (Chairman), Mr. McConnell, Mr. Shelby, Mr. Alexander, Ms. Collins, Ms. Murkowski, Mr. Graham, Mr. Kirk, Mr. Blunt, Mr. Moran, Mr. Hoeven, Mr. Boozman, Mrs. Capito, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Lankford, Mr. Daines.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS: Mr. Shelby (Chairman), Mr. Crapo, Mr. Corker, Mr. Vitter, Mr. Toomey, Mr. Kirk, Mr. Heller, Mr. Scott, Mr. Sasse, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Rounds, Mr. Moran.

COMMITTEE ON BUDGET: Mr. Enzi (Chairman), Mr. Grassley, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Crapo, Mr. Graham, Mr. Portman, Mr. Toomey, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Ayotte, Mr. Wicker, Mr. Corker, Mr. Perdue.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION: Mr. Thune (Chairman), Mr. Wicker, Mr. Blunt, Mr. Rubio, Ms. Ayotte, Mr. Cruz, Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Moran, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Heller, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Daines.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Mr. Inhofe (Chairman), Mr. Vitter, Mr. Barrasso, Mrs. Capito, Mr. Crapo, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Wicker, Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Rounds, Mr. Sullivan.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE: Mr. Hatch (Chairman), Mr. Grassley, Mr. Crapo, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Enzi, Mr. Cornyn, Mr. Thune, Mr. Burr, Mr. Isakson, Mr. Portman, Mr. Toomey, Mr. Coats, Mr. Heller, Mr. Scott.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS: Mr. Corker (Chairman), Mr. Risch, Mr. Rubio, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Flake, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Perdue, Mr. Isakson, Mr. Paul, Mr. Barrasso.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS: Mr. Alexander (Chairman), Mr. Enzi, Mr. Burr, Mr. Isakson, Mr. Paul, Ms. Collins, Ms. Murkowski, Mr. Kirk, Mr. Scott, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Cassidy.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS: Mr. Johnson (Chairman), Mr. McCain, Mr. Portman, Mr. Paul, Mr. Lankford, Ms. Ayotte, Mr. Enzi, Mrs. Ernst, Mr. Sasse.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY: Mr. Grassley (Chairman), Mr. Hatch, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Graham, Mr. Cornyn, Mr. Lee, Mr. Cruz, Mr. Vitter, Mr. Flake, Mr. Perdue, Mr. Tillis.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Blunt (Chairman), Mr. Alexander, Mr. McConnell, Mr. Cochran, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Shelby, Mr. Cruz, Mrs. Capito, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Wicker.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Mr. Vitter (Chairman), Mr. Risch, Mr. Rubio, Mr. Paul, Mr. Scott, Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Gardner, Mrs. Ernst, Ms. Ayotte, Mr. Enzi.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS: Mr. Isakson (Chairman), Mr. Moran, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Heller, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Rounds, Mr. Tillis, Mr. Sullivan.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS: Mr. Barrasso (Chairman), Mr. McCain, Ms. Murkowski, Mr. Hoeven, Mr. Lankford, Mr. Daines, Mr. Crapo, Mr. Moran.

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS: Mr. Isakson (Chairman), Mr. Roberts, Mr. Risch.

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE: Mr. Burr (Chairman), Mr. Risch, Mr. Coats, Mr. Rubio, Ms. Collins, Mr. Blunt, Mr. Lankford, Mr. Cotton.

COMMITTEE ON AGING: Ms. Collins (Chairman), Mr. Hatch, Mr. Kirk, Mr. Flake, Mr. Scott, Mr. Corker, Mr. Heller, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Perdue, Mr. Tillis, Mr. Sasse.

SENATE RESOLUTION 24—RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 24

Whereas on January 9, 2015, Bowie State University, located in Bowie, Maryland, will celebrate the founding of the university on January 9, 1865;

Whereas Bowie State University is the oldest historically black institution of higher