

rationalizations of Putin's war. Putin didn't invade Ukraine to protect Russian-speaking peoples or to establish a federal state. Putin didn't invade Ukraine because he is crazy or merely to reassert Russia's sphere of influence in the near abroad. Rather, Boris Nemtsov wrote that the goal of Putin's "fratricidal war" is the "preservation of personal power and money at any cost," a "cold strategy for lifelong despotism." Putin was willing to doom Russia to isolation and sanctions and to sink his country "into lies, violence, obscurantism, and imperial hysteria" for his own personal power and enrichment. As Boris Nemtsov knew, this is not Russia's war; this is not Ukraine's war; this is Vladimir Putin's war.

That is why Boris Nemtsov's murder is not just a tragedy for the people of Russia but for the people of Ukraine. He was one of the few brave Russians who sought to pierce the veneer of Putin's cynical and false narrative that Russia was not at war in Ukraine. There are many who now believe that Boris is yet another casualty of that war. At the memorial march honoring his life in Moscow on Sunday, one woman held a sign that read "The war killed Nemtsov."

I had long been concerned about Boris's safety and said so publicly. I will never forget the last meeting we had in my office. I begged him to be careful, and Boris told me he would never give up the fight for freedom, human rights, and rule of law for his fellow Russians, even if it cost him his life. I am heartbroken that it has come to that.

That Boris Nemtsov's murder occurred on a bridge in a shadow of the Kremlin in one of the most secure parts of the Russian capital raises serious questions about the circumstances of his killing and who was responsible. In KGB fashion, Vladimir Putin will round up all the usual suspects, but I fear we will never know who really pulled the trigger that night. Putin's farcical oversight of the investigation ensures that it will be a sham.

We don't need any investigation to know who was responsible for Boris's murder. Vladimir Putin may not have ordered Boris's assassination, but perhaps what is most frightening about Putin's Russia is that he didn't need to. Boris is dead because of the culture of impunity that Vladimir Putin has created in Russia, where individuals are routinely persecuted and attacked for their beliefs, including by the Russian Government, and no one is ever held responsible.

Sadly, Boris Nemtsov was not the first and certainly will not be the last victim of Putin's repression. The culture of impunity has steadily worsened, deepened by the increased surveillance and harassment of members of opposition and civil society groups, the ongoing detention of numerous political prisoners, and by the continued violent attacks on brave journalists who dare to publish the truth about of-

ficial corruption and other state crimes in Russia.

According to one news report, at least 23 journalists have been murdered in Russia for reporting on government criminality and abuse since Vladimir Putin came to power in 2000, along with several anti-Kremlin political activists. In only two of these cases have there been convictions.

Igor Domnikov, a reporter who was writing about government corruption, was severely beaten in Moscow. He died 2 months later.

Sergei Yushenkov, a leader of a Russian opposition party, was shot and killed at the entrance of his apartment building. At the time, he was serving on a commission investigating the Kremlin's potential role in the 1999 apartment bombings in Russia.

Another member of that commission, a reporter who was investigating corruption in Russian law enforcement, was poisoned to death.

American journalist Paul Klebnikov was investigating Russian Government connections to organized crime when he was shot to death in Moscow.

Anna Politkovskaya, a journalist and human rights activist, was a fierce critic of Vladimir Putin's brutal war in Chechnya. She was murdered in the stairwell of her apartment building on Vladimir Putin's birthday in 2006. The lawyer who represented her family later survived a poisoning attempt.

Former FSB officer Alexander Litvinenko exposed the Putin regime's massive corruption, ties to organized crime, and involvement in assassination and murder. He was poisoned in 2006 with a radioactive isotope in a brazen act of nuclear terrorism.

Ivan Safronov was investigating a secret sale of Russian missiles and fighter jets to Syria and Iran. He was pushed to his death from the window of his Moscow apartment.

Sergei Magnitsky blew the whistle on tax fraud and large-scale theft by Russian Government officials. He was thrown into one of Russia's harshest prisons without trial, beaten and tortured, denied medical care, and died in excruciating pain. Even after his death, the Russian courts convicted him of tax evasion in a show trial.

As Orwell once wrote, "In a time of universal deceit—telling the truth is a revolutionary act."

Russia has fewer and fewer revolutionaries, but Boris Nemtsov was certainly one of them. Boris told the truth and was willing to lay down his life for it. He told the truth about Putin's reign of terror and hatred. He told the truth about Putin's kleptocracy, rampant corruption, and systematic theft perpetrated against the Russian people. He told the truth about Putin's illegal invasion of the sovereign Nation of Ukraine and Russia's continued support for violence, instability, and terror.

Boris told the truth, and we must honor his memory by speaking these same truths fearlessly. Our Nation and

free people everywhere must draw strength from Boris's example and continue to resist Vladimir Putin's dark and dangerous view of the world.

Last Sunday, over 50,000 Russians marched in tribute to Boris Nemtsov, still seeking, despite the odds, what a Russian poet once called the footprints of the forgotten truth. At a funeral on Tuesday, thousands more waited in line in the cold for more than 1 hour to pay Boris their respects.

Finally, as the hearse carrying Boris Nemtsov pulled away, mourners tossed flowers and chanted: "Russia will be free!"

As I remember my friend Boris Nemtsov, that is my most sincere hope and fervent prayer.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 178, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 178) to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Pending:

Portman amendment No. 270, to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to enable State child protective services systems to improve the identification and assessment of child victims of sex trafficking.

Portman amendment No. 271, to amend the definition of "homeless person" under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to include certain homeless children and youth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the Senate is presently considering a series of human trafficking bills that will help law enforcement and nongovernmental organizations to take swift aggressive action to protect our most vulnerable populations and work to ensure justice, restitution, and healing for victims of these most horrific crimes.

Human trafficking—modern-day slavery—is not a vestige of the past. It is an evil presence here and now. Children and young adults are being bought and sold in our back yard. This problem knows no borders. It is happening in communities across Ohio. It is a particular problem in Toledo—northwest Ohio—where several north-south and east-west highways come together.

It is difficult even to obtain accurate information on this depraved crime

that happens in the shadows. But we know that as many as 17,000 individuals may be trafficked into our Nation each year, and some estimate that as many as 100,000 American children may be victims of trafficking within the United States each year.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act will give the Department of Justice additional tools to help victims and to crack down on this crime. It would enhance services for victims of human trafficking, and it would expand victim restitution, as well as provide additional resources to law enforcement to help improve human trafficking reporting and investigation.

There is bipartisan and bicameral support for the tracking provisions of this bill. This is a bill about human trafficking. We should not let it become a fight about abortion. I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will agree with this and strip out the Hyde language that has become such a point of controversy. I know reasonable people can disagree about the Hyde amendment, but now is not the time or place to debate it.

There is agreement—broad, wide, deep agreement—on the need to address trafficking. Americans from all walks of life have come to us asking that we do something. We can and we should. These new tools would be essential in assisting the Department of Justice, which has made combating trafficking a priority.

I would like to commend Attorney General Holder for his leadership on this issue. Under his management, DOJ's commitment to preventing human trafficking and bringing these criminals to justice has never been stronger. The Attorney General has really stepped up on this. This bill will give our next Attorney General, Loretta Lynch, the tools she needs to build upon Holder's efforts.

Another area where we can do more to prevent human trafficking is giving law enforcement in our communities the resources to find kids before they fall prey to traffickers. That is why I plan to introduce an amendment that would provide grants to local law enforcement for tracking down homeless and runaway youth, and that will include assistance for retired Federal agents to assist local law enforcement in these investigations. We must find these at-risk children and teens and bring them home before their youthful rebellion becomes something so much worse.

A group of retired FBI agents in northwest Ohio came to my office and asked for our help in the creation of a pilot program that would allow retired agents to assist local law enforcement in finding runaway kids and teens. Generally, northwest Ohio children who become involved in trafficking do so within about 2 weeks of running away from home. So finding them quickly is essential. About one-third of runaways become victims of trafficking. Think of that. One-third of

runaways become victims of trafficking.

Toledo has just one detective working on cases of missing children, both adult and children. These retired FBI agents want to help local law enforcement investigate the 18,000 runaways in Ohio every year, but they need help. Police don't have the manpower to track these children, but every city has retired agents who could assist the overworked departments.

I will also be introducing a series of amendments, which I hope will be bipartisan, including the Rape Survivor Child Custody Act, a bill I introduced in the last Congress with Senator AYOTTE. We know that human trafficking victims are especially vulnerable to sexual assault. Women who give birth to a child conceived through rape can often face intimidation from attackers who pursue, amazingly enough, parental rights.

My amendment would help protect these survivors by encouraging States to pass laws allowing women to petition for the termination of their attacker's parental rights, if there is clear and convincing evidence the child was conceived through rape. These women have already been subjected to horrific crimes. They should not have to suffer a life of intrusion by the man who raped them.

I was first moved to introduce this bill because of the case of Ariel Castro in Cleveland. He was on trial in Ohio for kidnapping, raping, and holding prisoner three women for nearly a decade. He asked the judge for parental rights to visit his 6-year-old daughter he conceived through rape.

While the judge denied his request, Ohio has no law that prevents rapists such as Castro from claiming parental rights and forcing their victims to let these criminals into their children's lives. I hope this law encourages Ohio and other States to pass laws making it clear that anyone who commits such a terrible act forfeits any right to parent a child he forced on his victim. This amendment will help protect rape survivors, ensuring their right to care for their children free from fear.

Senators KLOBUCHAR, CORKER, and LEAHY also have their own bill, which they plan to offer as amendments, and which will help us to work to stamp out this terrible crime.

Finally, I want to commend those in my State who have helped lead the way on this issue. There is a history of strong bipartisanship on this issue that cuts across all ideological lines. State Representative Teresa Fedor helped to lead a successful fight for passage of the safe harbor bill in the Ohio legislature 3 years ago.

Dr. Celia Williamson, a professor of social work at the University of Toledo, is recognized nationally, and even internationally, as a leader in human trafficking research and activism. She has been a tremendous force on this issue. With her help and leadership, the University of Toledo just established

the Human Trafficking and Social Justice Institute. The university has hosted annual human trafficking conferences, and the formation of this institute is a terrific next step in its commitment to addressing a problem that plagues Toledo and too often goes unacknowledged and unaddressed.

Finally, I want to commend the members of the Lucas County Human Trafficking Coalition, which has had some very diverse membership and has worked for several years to better coordinate and provide services to victims.

Human trafficking is a problem that knows no borders and, of course, knows no political party. I hope we can continue to work together to combat this awful epidemic. I hope we will be able to work through our issues to resolve the issue with the Hyde amendment language.

We must take swift and aggressive language to prevent these crimes and work to ensure justice and restitution and healing for its victims.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we are debating a bill today that should be about an issue we can all agree on—eliminating human trafficking. This bill should be about protecting women's health and rights and about fighting back against the unacceptable presence of human slavery in our country. In other words, if anything should be bipartisan, this bill is it.

I know many of us were hoping this bill—the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act—would be an example of Republicans and Democrats working together because surely we can agree these problems need to be addressed—and urgently—and that the gridlock and dysfunction we see far too often in Congress should have absolutely no place in this discussion. So I am appalled that on a bill intended to help women, Republicans actually have chosen to double down on their political fight against women's health. Republicans have tried to sneak in a provision that would hurt women and drag this bill into yet another partisan fight. They just can't seem to help themselves.

The provision the Republicans are hoping to sneak in—again, on a human trafficking bill—would be a permanent extension of the so-called Hyde amendment. It would move beyond the status quo, which only applies to appropriated taxpayer money, and expand it into the new nontax-funding streams this bill would authorize. That means if this law passes—a law intended to help women who have experienced truly horrific violence and hardship—Congress would at the same time allow politicians to interfere even more with the most deeply personal health decisions a woman can make.

Trying to slip a women's health restriction into a women's safety bill is akin to slipping a tractor ban into the farm bill. It doesn't make sense.

This isn't the first time Republicans have tried this political stunt. Again

and again Republicans in Congress have picked completely unnecessary political fights over women's health. They threatened a government shutdown over Planned Parenthood funding in 2011. They have tried to jam through reproductive health riders on appropriations legislation. House Republicans even attached women's health restrictions to the education bill they tried to pass this month. It is shocking to see it happening again.

The good news is that the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act can still be the bipartisan legislation it should be. Democrats are here and ready to work with Republicans to fix this bill and move past this partisan debate over women's health. We are very hopeful that once that happens, we can get this bill passed and take a step toward solving a horrible problem we all know needs a solution.

I hope my Republican colleagues agree with me that women deserve better than one step backward for every step forward when it comes to their health and their rights. I hope they agree that a bill to end modern-day slavery in the United States is not the right time to try to sneak in a political victory for their base. If they agree, they will prove that by working with us rather than focusing on political fights we have seen more than enough of in this Congress.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment to call up my amendment No. 285.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BROWN. I object on behalf of a number of Members on this side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, it is hard to adequately express my frustration that we can't get moving on this bill.

First of all, the underlying bill that our friends on the other side are blocking progress on is a very sensible, important, constructive bill. I commend Senator CORNYN for having introduced this. I am proud to be a cosponsor.

This is the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

Let's be clear what this is about. We have a huge problem in this country. In all 50 States there are people who actually engage in the buying and selling of human beings, mostly women and young children, in a sex trade. That is what is happening. And this is a bill that would enhance the penalties and

thereby discourage this activity. It would take some of the proceeds from the penalties paid by these monsters who would engage in this kind of activity and it would use those proceeds to help victims. I don't understand where the objection comes from for a bill such as this, and now we can't move ahead on my amendment.

My amendment is a little bit different but it is in a similar vein. It is designed to help protect children from sexual predators in schools, and we just heard the objection. The folks on the other side of the aisle somehow object to legislation that would enhance a protection for the kids in our schools. Let me explain why this is so important.

The inspiration for this bipartisan bill that I have introduced with Senator MANCHIN and which I just tried to call up as an amendment and I was prevented from doing so—the inspiration for this is an absolutely horrendous story that begins in Delaware County, PA.

There was a schoolteacher who for years was molesting boys in his care. He raped one of the boys. The prosecutors discovered what was going on, but they never had enough evidence to actually press charges. The school knew what was going on, so they decided: Why don't we make this monster someone else's problem? And that is exactly what they did.

They wrote a letter of recommendation so this animal could go across the State line—which he did—get hired by a school in West Virginia—which he did—and become a teacher, eventually rise to be principal, and along the way continue molesting we don't know how many kids, but we do know in the end he raped and killed a 12-year-old boy. Because that is what these people do. And there is a practice that happens—as hard as this is to talk about, as unbelievable as this is in practice, it is a reality that some schools would like these people to become someone else's problem, and they actually give them a letter of recommendation so they can go somewhere. And they do indeed become someone else's problem. That is what I am trying to stop here. That is what we are trying to stop.

This happened with a teacher who left Pennsylvania and went to West Virginia, and the little boy's name was Jeremy Bell.

Senator MANCHIN from West Virginia and I have teamed up on a bill that would make this practice of knowingly and willfully aiding a known pedophile from getting a job somewhere else—we would make that illegal.

We wouldn't think we should have to do that because we wouldn't think anybody with a conscience could do it, but it happens. We know it happens. We have heard these stories time and again.

By the way, this is not such an isolated event as we would like to think it is. Last year alone, 459 teachers and other school employees across America

were arrested for sexual misconduct with the kids they were supposed to be taking care of and looking after.

We all know that for the vast majority of schoolteachers it would never occur to them. It would never cross their mind, they would never do such a thing. But there are a number of pedophiles—monsters who prey on kids. And they know where the kids are. So they try to find their way into these schools so they can prey on the victims.

The 459 who were arrested last year were the ones we knew enough about that prosecutors felt they could prosecute, so they made an arrest. How many more are happening but we don't know enough of the specifics, we don't have a strong enough case to actually make an arrest?

So far this year, we are not off to a much better start. We are 69 days into the new school year, and already 82 people have been arrested across America.

This isn't some isolated one-time problem. This is a genuine problem we need to do something to solve, so Senator MANCHIN and I have come together with a bill that addresses this.

The whole idea, the whole goal, is very simple: Let's make sure schools are not hiring these predators and we are protecting our kids from them. It does that with two mechanisms, two simple provisions that achieve this.

One is it requires background checks that will get the job done and screen out those who have a previous conviction; and it will also make it illegal to have this terrible practice of passing the trash—this terrible practice of recommending a teacher who is a known pedophile. Neither of these mechanisms should be controversial.

This is almost identical legislation which passed the House unanimously. The House is not exactly known for not having any partisan divides, and yet it passed unanimously. We have Members of this body who were Members of the House in the last Congress and voted for it then, are now cosponsors of this legislation, and amazingly to me we are having this discussion.

I am being blocked from offering this amendment. The language in my amendment is almost identical to the language we had in the child care development block grant, which this body voted for and all but one Member voted in favor of that bill, which would provide exactly this kind of criminal background check on employees for daycare.

This body has voted to ensure the protection of really young kids, as it should have. I fully supported that. Why would we block providing comparable protection to kids who are just a little bit older? How can it be that we want to make sure pedophiles don't get into our daycare centers but it is OK for them to be in elementary schools, in middle schools, and in high schools? This makes no sense at all. And it is necessary, because while every State

has some kind of background check system, there are huge loopholes, there are huge gaps, there are huge inconsistencies that are allowing people to get through.

Our legislation would require background checks on any adult hired by a school who would come in unsupervised contact with kids—teachers, contractors, schoolbus drivers, a sports coach—anybody so that we would be protecting our kids from pedophiles who actively seek the opportunity to prey on these kids.

One of the things we do to make sure the background check would be thorough is we require that the school districts would check both the State and Federal databases. Let me give a story about why this is so important.

In Alaska, parents got a very rude awakening when they discovered this story. It was on August 29 of last year. Alaska State troopers arrested a middle school teacher in Kiana, AK.

The teacher had fled Missouri 4 years earlier to escape an arrest warrant. Multiple witnesses accused the teacher of over a decade of sexual and physical abuse of his own adopted kids. He had raped and starved his own children. These kids literally burrowed a hole through the wall so they could take frozen food out of the freezer. They heated it up on a furnace just to survive. It is just one of those unbelievable horror stories—while this monster was able to obtain a teaching certificate in Alaska and teach there—teaching kids for 4 years.

When asked how this could possibly happen, the Alaska Department of Education explained that Alaska's background checks only check the State's criminal registry. Now, had our legislation been in force, they would have been required to check the Federal registry, and they would have learned that he was a fugitive with an arrest warrant and a criminal record in another State. That is the kind of ability we have to have to prevent these people from going across States and committing these kinds of crimes.

The other provision that I mentioned earlier is a provision that would preclude—make it illegal—for someone knowingly to recommend a pedophile to be hired at another school. Again, you would like to think that something like that wouldn't even be necessary. But it is, and another story reveals this recently.

A Las Vegas, NV, kindergarten teacher was arrested for kidnapping a 16-year-old girl and infecting her with a sexually transmitted disease. That same teacher had molested six children, all fourth and fifth graders, several years before when that teacher was working in the Los Angeles school district.

The Los Angeles school district knew all about these allegations. In 2009, in fact, the school district recommended settling a lawsuit they were facing because the teacher had molested the children. The Nevada school district to

which the pedophile went had specifically asked if there were any criminal concerns regarding the teacher, and the Los Angeles school district not only hid the truth that they knew about this guy's predations, but they actually provided three references so that he could get hired in Las Vegas.

So for people who say the States can solve these problems themselves, I would ask: What was that 16-year-old girl supposed to do? What could Nevada have done about the Los Angeles school district's behavior?

So I am not going away on this. This is something that we need to do. I have three young kids. When any one of us parents anywhere in America puts our children on the school bus in the morning, we have every right to expect they are going to a place where they will be safe—as safe as they could possibly be. We know that there is more that we could be doing here to make them safer. It is unconscionable that we don't act on it.

So I will be back, because we are going to have a vote on this one way or another, and I am very disappointed we couldn't have it this morning.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I would like to follow up on something that the Senator from Pennsylvania just said on the process—not on the substance of these amendments.

We are in a situation where we have a bill before the Senate that has broad bipartisan support, and it came out of the committee I chaired, the Senate Judiciary Committee, on a unanimous vote. Now we are stalled on proceedings, and I would like to emphasize what is different and why this bill should be moving forward in the year 2015 as opposed to the last few years when the other political party controlled the Senate.

In the U.S. political system, elections are supposed to have consequences, and as a consequence of the last election, there is a new majority in the Senate. That new majority results from campaign positions taken in the last election that if we had a new majority, the Senate was going to be run in the way that James Madison implied that it ought to run—as a deliberative body, as a body where every Member could participate, where you would reach consensus, and where you give very serious thought to legislation that comes before this body—and do it in a way differently than the House of Representatives was meant to do business and has done business for the 230 years under our Constitution.

So we ran on a platform that we would have the Senate debate and be open for amendments, and the leader announced that when this bill was going to come up, it would be an open amendment process. Everybody could participate. Now we are in a situation where the minority is not allowing us to move forward on amendments be-

cause they have objections to a provision that was in this bill since its introduction. Every Member had not only days but weeks to consider it before it came out of committee on a unanimous vote. And those provisions that were in this bill from the introduction—and every Senator knew they were in there, and every Senator's staff knew they were in there. If they didn't know that this language was in there, then they didn't read the legislation. There are plenty of people to read legislation around here, even beyond the Members of the committee.

So this language deals with what is called the Hyde amendment, which for either 39 or 40 years has basically said that taxpayers' money should never be used to finance abortions. So all of a sudden there is objection to that language in this bill, which was in the bill when the very same Members who are objecting to it now on the floor of the Senate knew it was in there, and we can't move forward because they object to the amendment.

So I proposed to them that they offer an amendment to strike what they don't like and find out where the votes are. If they win, they win. If they don't win, we move forward. But you can't hardly hold up a piece of legislation over language that is in the bill that has been part of the law of this country for 39 or 40 years and then say that you didn't know it was in there, when it was in there when you voted to get it out of committee.

Senator TOOMEY just gave a speech about his amendment. He asked unanimous consent to bring it up. The minority in the Senate, which has the same right to offer amendments that any other Senator can offer, refused to let him get a vote on his amendment or even disputed the fact of laying an amendment aside to move forward on it. So we are at a standstill.

Statistically, I would like to show how the new majority is intending to operate the Senate on a different basis than had been operated on in previous years and use statistics of last year. If the statistics are off by 1 or 2 numbers, I hope somebody will forgive me. But roughly, we had 18 rollcalls on amendments last year, because there was every effort to be made to stall the Senate so amendments couldn't come up for a vote. Already this year we have had approximately 40-some rollcall votes on amendments, and more than a majority of those have been amendments offered by the minority party in the Senate.

So the elections showed that people want the Senate to work as a deliberative body, where every Senator can participate, and we ought to move forward on that.

I would ask the people who object to moving forward on this amendment to offer an amendment to strike the provisions they don't like and move on so that the other several Members of the Senate who are stalled now on offering their amendments can offer their

amendments and eventually we can get through those amendments and vote on a bill that got out of the Senate Judiciary Committee without a single dissenting vote from either Republicans or Democrats.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, of course I also would like to see the trafficking bill go forward.

I am looking around the floor of the Senate, and I think I am the only person standing on the floor who has actually prosecuted people for molestation and endangerment of children.

I am not going to repeat what I said yesterday. I talked about some of those horrible cases, and I did mention having young children of my own at the time and how hard working on those cases hit me. When normally preparing for trials—in the evenings, in most cases—I could just work at home preparing for the trial. When preparing for these types of cases however, I didn't come home. I would work in my office for two reasons. I didn't want to take any chance, inadvertently, that one of my children would see any of the pictures or the exhibits that we were going to have in the trial, as graphic as they were. But also, I didn't want them to see their father crying, which I did as I would read these files, and have them ask me why I was crying, because I couldn't lie to them. It was better just to stay in the office.

I say that because we have to approach this not just in the after-the-fact manner expressed. I like the idea of having the \$30 million to help those who have been hurt—the victims. I worry, as the House of Representatives worried, that if it is simply money that comes from fines, we are never going to see that money. All the people I prosecuted on crimes against young people went to prison. If you could have given them a \$50 million fine or a \$50 fine, they weren't going to pay it. They had no money. After their defense was over, they had no funds.

At some point we are going to have to correct that. Say \$30 million is a good target, and any fines will go into that fund, but we should take taxpayers' funds to make up any difference.

When we lock these people up, we spend \$25,000 or \$35,000 a year to lock them up. But half of the time we tell the victim: It is terrible what happened to you. Sorry, we can't do anything for you.

We also have to approach the things necessary to prevent what happened. I am filing a Leahy-Collins amendment, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Trafficking Prevention Act. I will file that. The amendment will help runaways such as Holly Austin Smith. She was 14 years old when she was lured away from home by a man who promised her a glamorous life in California. Instead, he sold this 14-year-old for sex. She told her devastating story to the

Senate Judiciary Committee last month. Both Senator GRASSLEY and I were there and heard it. I was certainly moved by her words and call for action.

She told us to protect girls such as her, saying that "policies on prevention should be one of our highest priorities." I agree. That is why Senator COLLINS and I are offering this amendment.

Of course we should have the ability to go after somebody who has committed these crimes. But wouldn't it be better for the victims if we could stop the crime from happening in the first place? If we can do something to help people such as this 14-year-old and we can stop it from happening in the first place, we would be much better off.

Too many of the runaway and homeless youth in this country have no place to go. They have no place to sleep at night. They are alone on the street without resources or adults to protect them, and human traffickers know that. One shelter survey found that 50 percent of the homeless youth have been solicited for sex by an adult within 48 hours of leaving home.

I ask any parent or grandparent in this Senate: What would you think if your children or grandchildren were put in that situation?

This is not a Republican or a Democratic issue, this is a human issue—this is an American issue.

It is our hope that we can work around what I hope is a momentary glitch in this bill so we can get to these things.

I will say again, based on my own experience as a prosecutor and based on everything I have heard over the years—part of the time as the ranking member and part of the time as chairman of the Judiciary Committee during the past 40 years—that when it comes to the fight against human trafficking, we cannot simply focus on ending demand and arrest our way out of this problem. We have to eliminate the conditions that make these children so vulnerable.

The good news is the program supported by this amendment has helped thousands of young people get back on their feet by providing shelter, job training, and caring adults to counsel and guide them. These programs work. They keep kids safe, and they save lives.

A growing number of homeless and runaway youth are LGBT, and many of them have been thrown out of their homes for who they are. Again, as a parent and grandparent, that is heart-breaking to me. We have to ensure that these particularly vulnerable children, who have already been rejected once, do not face rejection again, and that is why Senator COLLINS and I included a nondiscrimination provision in our amendment that will make clear that any program accepting Federal dollars must help care for all of these children. They can't turn these young people away because they do not like the way they look or dress or who they love. No

program that takes Federal money should be allowed to discriminate, period.

The nondiscrimination language in this bill is nearly identical to the language that 78 Senators—Republicans and Democrats alike—supported in this body when we passed the Violence Against Women Act in the last Congress, the Leahy-Crapo bill. It is the same language the Republican-controlled House passed and the President signed into law 2 years ago.

Last year, as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I moved this legislation through committee and Senator GRASSLEY and Senator CORNYN, to their credit, and almost every Republican on the Judiciary Committee voted for it. If these protections are acceptable for adult victims of domestic and sexual violence, why shouldn't they be for children? No one should be discriminated against, but especially not these vulnerable children who have already faced more adversity than many of us will ever know.

We, as Senators, lead a privileged and sheltered life. We work hard, but it is still a privileged and sheltered life. We are not facing what these children are facing—a scared, vulnerable, lonely child at a bus stop or trying to get somebody to buy them a pizza because they are hungry or looking for a place where they can sleep out of the cold. We are never going to face that, but too many Americans do.

Some may argue and say that the antidiscrimination language somehow threatens religious freedom. That is not true. No one's religious freedom is threatened by this language. This is not about religion, it about supporting all of the children who most desperately need our help.

I understand their concerns. We have narrowed the scope of this provision so it applies only to these programs being reauthorized in this amendment. We have also clarified that nothing in this bill stops organizations from providing necessary sex-specific programming, such as shelters for homeless, runaway, or trafficked girls.

I have heard from dozens of service providers in my State of Vermont, and also across the country, that these programs work.

As Cyndi Lauper, a long-time advocate for homeless and runaway youth, wrote in an op-ed for *The Hill* yesterday, "The time to act is now, because homeless youth don't have the time for us to wait until tomorrow."

Who will help these young people if we do not? These children are too often left behind, and for too many being left behind means being trafficked. We cannot and should not leave them behind today.

I urge all Senators that when the amendment is called up to support it. I ask unanimous consent that the op-ed that was in *The Hill* be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From The Hill, March 10, 2015]

DON'T LET THE SENATE THROW AWAY 40
PERCENT OF AMERICA'S HOMELESS YOUTH
(By Cyndi Lauper)

"Enough is enough." It's a phrase that is said all too often about so many issues in our society, but unfortunately not enough when it comes to our nation's most vulnerable young people.

Congress must reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), our nation's only federal law that specifically funds vital services for homeless youth. Republicans and Democrats have come together to ensure that our Federal Government offers much needed support to all homeless youth.

Sens. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) have introduced bipartisan legislation to reauthorize RHYA, which will likely be brought up for a floor vote in the Senate this week—possibly as soon as today.

The act includes a non-discrimination clause that will help ensure lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) homeless youth not only have access to critical services, but that those services are safe, welcoming, and tailored to meet the needs of all youth.

We need that clause and some groups are trying to push to have it taken out. I was taught to listen to Proverbs 31: Speak up for those who cannot speak up for themselves. Our kids need us to protect them, not to discriminate against them.

Research shows that while LGBT youth make up to seven percent of the general youth population, they comprise, on average, 40 percent of the 1.6 million youth that are homeless in this country each year. Think about that. It's impossible to ignore.

There is no getting around the fact that these kids are too often being thrown out of their homes and left to fend for themselves on the streets. The fact that this occurs each and every day in our country is simply a tragedy—a tragedy that does not have to continue.

At the True Colors Fund, we continue to hear stories of young people being discriminated against, offered improper services, and even turned away by service providers just because they happen to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. By continuing to leave 40 percent of our homeless youth unprotected, we are cutting our society off at the knees.

Kids actually ARE our future. What kind of future do we have in store if we do not care for all of our youth? ALL deserve to have their needs met so that these incredible and courageous young people can achieve their dreams and become healthy, happy, and contributing members of our society. These are our future teachers, parents, and leaders and we cannot afford to leave even one of them behind.

Programs and services receiving federal funding must be inclusive of all youth. Congress can start by passing the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act to ensure that all youth are protected in the vital programs that it would reauthorize. The time to act is now, because homeless youth don't have the time for us to wait until tomorrow.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise to offer an amendment to Senator CORNYN's bill, S. 178, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

Under current law, there are many trafficking victims who, even after gaining freedom from their captors, have to live their lives stuck with a criminal record because of things they were forced to do in captivity.

Imagine being freed from the hell of sexual slavery only to find yourself unable to get a job or stable housing because the law considers you a criminal.

My amendment, the Federal Criminal Procedure Post-Conviction Relief For Victims of Trafficking Act, would vacate the criminal convictions of trafficking victims who were forced to break the law while they were trafficked. It would expunge the criminal records of trafficking victims and it would give trafficking victims a chance to restart their lives without stigma and without a criminal record.

These boys and girls were snatched into captivity. They were forced into sexual slavery, and they were denied the freedom to make their own decisions, including the chance to say no to committing a crime.

These victims are not criminals. Their bodies are scarred. Their memories are shaken by trauma. The least Congress can do is give them the dignity of a clean record and a new chance to lead a fulfilling life. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I also wish to urge my colleagues to support a bill Senator RUBIO and I introduced called the Strengthening the Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act. This bill would require each State to develop a plan to protect young victims of labor and sex trafficking from falling back into captivity after they have escaped.

As it stands now, many of the various services and programs that are meant to keep children from these dangerous, oppressive cycles are failing to do their jobs. Instead of being protected and comforted as victims of violent crime, young trafficking survivors are sent into the juvenile justice system and treated as criminals—as if it were their own fault and their own choice that they were held in captivity and forced into exploitation. This is just not the case.

This bill would give American children better trained protective service workers, better lines of communication between victims and protective services, and better data on where trafficking crimes are actually occurring, how often, and whom traffickers are targeting.

I commend my colleagues for bringing this issue of human trafficking so boldly to the Senate floor, and I encourage everyone in this Chamber to support these legislative efforts to solve our country's trafficking problem.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 284 TO AMENDMENT NO. 271

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I send a second-degree amendment to the desk, Vitter amendment No. 284, to Portman amendment No. 271, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. VITTER] proposes an amendment numbered 284 to amendment No. 271.

Mr. VITTER. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To amend section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to clarify those classes of individuals born in the United States who are nationals and citizens of the United States at birth)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. —. CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH FOR CERTAIN
PERSONS BORN IN THE UNITED
STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1401) is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a) IN GENERAL.—" before "The following";

(2) by redesignating subsections (a) through (h) as paragraphs (1) through (8), respectively, and indenting such paragraphs, as redesignated, an additional 2 ems to the right; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(b) DEFINITION.—Acknowledging the right of birthright citizenship established by section 1 of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, a person born in the United States shall be considered 'subject to the jurisdiction' of the United States for purposes of subsection (a)(1) only if the person is born in the United States and at least 1 of the person's parents is—

"(1) a citizen or national of the United States;

"(2) an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States whose residence is in the United States; or

"(3) an alien performing active service in the armed forces (as defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code)."

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(3) may not be construed to affect the citizenship or nationality status of any person born before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) SEVERABILITY.—If any provision of this section or any amendment made by this section, or any application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act and the application of the provision or amendment to any other person or circumstance shall not be affected.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, this is the same amendment I presented—tried to present—and discussed on the floor of the Senate yesterday. It addresses a very serious problem with our

broken immigration system as well as a problem that leads to serious abuse and trafficking, which is why it is certainly relevant and pertinent in this ongoing discussion of the bill on the floor.

First of all, let me again compliment Senator CORNYN and everyone who has joined him on a bipartisan basis in support of his antihuman trafficking amendment. I think that underlying bill is very positive and very significant. I certainly fully support it, apart from how my amendment fares. Obviously I hope my now second-degree amendment to the Portman amendment is adopted, but I certainly support this underlying effort, which is very important.

As I said, my amendment pertains to birthright citizenship and the fact that that now acts as an enormous magnet to increase and encourage illegal crossings into our country. It also has spawned an entire subculture and industry, quite frankly, that has given rise to significant abuse—often very dangerous and horrific conditions for the women and families who are caught in it.

Yesterday, as part of my floor statement, I submitted for the RECORD several news reports that underscored these cases of abuse. This came to light in part because of the raid by Federal agencies just within the last few weeks of these so-called birth tourism businesses, and those Federal raids uncovered some truly grizzly situations in California and elsewhere that underscore my point.

This ad, which is an ad on behalf of one of these birth tourism companies in China, also underscores my point. The Presiding Officer and I couldn't come up with a cartoon such as this and call it fiction if we were challenged to, but this is real. This is an actual cartoon ad enticing birth mothers in China to go to the United States, to come back with their baby having been born in the United States, and the baby wrapped in the American flag means automatic U.S. citizen. That of course triggers all sorts of significant benefits and opportunities for the immediate family of that baby to in the future come to the United States and become citizens.

This birthright citizenship has clearly mushroomed into a significant problem and a significant form of abuse of our immigration system.

According to the Center for Immigration Studies, every year about 300,000 to 400,000 children are born to illegal aliens in the United States, and under this practice—and I underscore “practice”—of birthright citizenship—and I will come back to that word because it is not mandated by the Constitution—they automatically are recognized as U.S. citizens simply and purely because of the physical location of their physical birth.

I said “practice” for a reason. It is not mandated by the Constitution as opposed to what we hear on a regular

basis. It isn't even mandated by statutory law. It is the practice of several administrations, including this one. It is a very uncommon practice if we look worldwide. Only Canada, among advanced or industrialized countries, follows this practice along with the United States. No other advanced or industrialized country—for instance, no European country—follows this practice of counting folks, giving them citizenship based purely on the fact, on the accident of the location of their physical birth.

My amendment would change this. It would simply say a person can only be a citizen if they were born in this country and at least one parent is a U.S. citizen or a legal, valid green card holder or a serving member of the U.S. military. That is a commonsense rule that I think the vast—in fact, I know from public polling and other means—the vast majority of Americans of all stripes, of all walks of life, and of both parties support.

Again, let me be clear. My amendment would say a child born in this country is a U.S. citizen if they are born in this country and at least one of the parents is a U.S. citizen or a valid green card holder or a member of the U.S. military.

If there is any policy reason why that rule is unreasonable, I would love to hear it. I have been promoting this debate, I have been pushing this change of policy for several years now, and I have never heard a real debate on the policy, on the merits. There are lots of excuses that people don't want to bring this up, don't want to have a vote, but I have never heard a real debate and objection on the merits.

That being said, let me move to one of the excuses, and the most popular excuse given is that somehow this is embedded in the Constitution—specifically, the 14th Amendment—and we can't change this absent a constitutional amendment. I am absolutely convinced that is not true, and I will explain why.

The first reason I think we can glean that it is not true is the language of the 14th Amendment. That is a good place to start, right? We are talking about the 14th Amendment. We are talking about a specific constitutional provision, so let's start by going there and see what it says. Does it say everyone physically born in this country is a U.S. citizen, period? No, it does not. So what does it say? It extends citizenship to “all persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof.” The key phrase is “and subject to the jurisdiction thereof.”

As the Presiding Officer knows, our Founding Fathers, including our later Founding Fathers who came up with the language of the 14th Amendment, chose their words carefully, and it is a fundamental rule of either constitutional or statutory construction that any word there, any phrase there must be there for a reason. It is not there

just to add extra words without adding meaning.

So that phrase absolutely has to mean something. It has to be there for a reason. When we look at the history of the 14th Amendment, the debate, the discussion in Congress, it is very clear it was there for a reason. It was there to exclude persons born in the United States who had allegiance, who had some calling to another country. Specifically, the folks participating in that debate talking about this language said, We are not including American Indians; they have an allegiance to the tribe. We are not including aliens. Aliens—that word was broadly used. We are not including aliens. That certainly includes in today's language illegal aliens who have an allegiance to another country. They are citizens of another country. We are not including the children of diplomats who happen to be born here during their diplomat parents' stay. They clearly are citizens of another country. They have an allegiance to another country.

This line of thought was further elucidated by court decisions. In fact, there is a specific court decision with regard to American Indians. The Court directly said in that case, no, the 14th Amendment does not make American Indian children automatically U.S. citizens—based on the specific language I am citing. Because of that, it wasn't until the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 was passed, explicitly making those children American citizens, that they became American citizens. Much more recently, respected jurists such as Judge Richard Posner of the Seventh Circuit wrote in a 2003 case:

Congress would not be flouting the Constitution if it amended the Immigration and Nationality Act to put an end to the nonsense.

Talking specifically about birthright citizenship. So I hope we get through these excuses, these flawed constitutional arguments, these flawed arguments. Really, they are excuses to avoid the debate, to avoid the issue, to avoid giving any reason why we should not go to the rule I am proposing. Why we should, in fact, recognize any child physically born in this country as automatically a U.S. citizen, even if neither parent is a citizen, neither parent is here in the country legally, neither parent is a green card holder, neither parent is a serving member of the U.S. Armed Services.

As I explained at the beginning, this is a very real, in fact, exploding phenomenon. There is a whole industry, an underworld, that is selling so-called birth tourism. This ridiculous but true cartoon is an example. This acts as a magnet—a potent, powerful magnet growing in power by the year to lure more and more folks to come across the border in specific cases to have their babies here, 300,000 to 400,000 per year.

In the last few weeks, as I mentioned earlier, there was a raid by the relevant Federal agencies on some of

these underworld and trafficking operations related to birth tourism. It hit the news. It made significant news, as it should have. It was a significant law enforcement action. I applaud that action. It is a dangerous element. It is an underworld, usually criminal elements in the midst of that, oftentimes abusing the women and children who have been placed into their hands.

Clearly, the most effective way to put an immediate end to all of this is not simply conducting a law enforcement raid once every 5 years or once every 3 years or even once a week. Clearly, the most effective way to end this is to end the practice of birthright citizenship. That is what my amendment—now a second-degree amendment pending to the Portman amendment—would do.

I urge all of my colleagues to put an end to this nonsense, as Judge Posner said in his dicta, to set our policy straight, to adopt the commonsense position of the vast majority of the American people, to adopt the same policy of every advanced industrialized country now save us and Canada, and to adopt this language on the present bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I want to talk about the bill we are looking at now, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. Certainly there is nothing more hideous, nothing more morally offensive than the sexual exploitation of a human being. Take that exploitation today at a level that happens over and over again with children and with adults. This is modern-day slavery. It exists right here in our country and all over the world. Slavery officially ended in the United States 150 years ago. Worldwide there may be more people involved in enslaved activity and labor or in sex trafficking than at any other time.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, at least 100,000 American children each year are victims of commercial child prostitution, child trafficking, other children brought to this country. Certainly this is not a tragedy that is isolated in the United States. In fact, it is worse than other places, but it is unacceptable in all places.

Women and children, especially young girls, are advertised online where buyers purchase them with ease, generally with anonymity, and usually with impunity. We are told this happens in most cities in our country and in every State in our country. But this fight against sex trafficking and labor trafficking isn't just a law enforcement issue, it is a human rights issue, and we should take it as seriously as we possibly can take anything.

That is why I was pleased to join Senator CORNYN and Senator AYOTTE and others in cosponsoring and supporting the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. This act would provide law

enforcement, the courts, and antitrafficking task forces with the necessary tools to help them track down traffickers; and it would also help victims restore their lives.

Last year we were able to pass the continuation of the Victims of Child Abuse Act, of which in our State we have 22 centers. We have hundreds of centers in the country where the beginning of restoration comes with that first interview, that first determination. We are putting this behind us and moving forward. That same thing needs to happen with victims of exploitation. This bill helps victims of trafficking who are often invisible, often underserved, often unknown by anybody in the community where they have been taken except a person who somehow has seized control of them and the people with whom that person deals.

This bill would create grants for State and local governments to develop comprehensive systems to address these crimes and to provide services for the victims of these crimes. This legislation would allow wiretaps obtained through State courts to be used to stop child sex trafficking. This would train Federal prosecutors and judges on the importance of requesting and ordering restitution.

In the last few days we passed a law that hopefully will wind up on the President's desk so there could be some compensation for victims of child pornography. We need to have that same kind of restitution and seizing of assets of these criminals who use people in this way, and this bill allows some of those things to happen. It trains law enforcement on the physical and mental services that are immediately necessary, and necessary in a longer term, for victims of trafficking.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act has been endorsed by 200 advocacy groups. Those would include the NAACP, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Rights4Girls, the National Association to Protect Children, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the National Conference of State Legislators. We need to get this done.

The elimination of sex trafficking has to be also focused on the demand side. Without the buyers and facilitators, sex trafficking wouldn't happen. Labor trafficking wouldn't happen unless there were buyers of that unwilling labor. Neither of these things should be allowed to continue. This bill deals with this topic in our country. I know the Foreign Relations Committee is looking at what we can do to encourage the elimination of this travesty and tragedy all over the world.

We have to take a stand against this modern-day slavery. This is a problem that I hope we see Senators on both sides of the aisle step up to in the next few days and hopefully this week and figure out how to serve.

REMEMBERING TOM SCHWEICH

Madam President, this is the first chance I have had to be on the floor

since I attended a memorial service a week ago yesterday in our State memorializing the life of our State auditor, Tom Schweich. Tom Schweich was very smart. He was very capable. He was very good at his job. He had a wonderful family. He had established such a record as State auditor that at the end of his first term, Tom Schweich, a Republican, wasn't even opposed by a Democrat. I think it was the first time in our State since the 1880s that the Democrats had not offered a candidate for any State office.

Sometimes people with great capacity and great opportunity can face challenges that others do not see. Tom's family is missing him. His friends are missing him. Missouri will miss him but certainly benefited from his good work. I am thinking today, as I have every day since I heard the news of his death, about the service he provided, the lost opportunity of not having him with us any longer, and I am thinking about his family.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I first want to thank my colleagues who are continuing to work on this very important issue of sex trafficking, Senator GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, and Senator LEAHY, the ranking member, who has long been working on this issue and has a very important bill of his own related to this, as well as Senator CORNYN. Senator CORNYN and I have worked together on the sex trafficking issue for the past year. We are cosponsors of each other's bills. We have worked in the past on other judiciary issues, including a successful bill on prescription drug take-backs, where we just recently were able to get the rules out and got to work on that very important issue. I thank him for his good work. We continue to work on the bill, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. We know there are some major issues that have come up, and we continue to look for a path forward on that issue.

I do want to point out that sometimes in all of the disagreements, what gets lost is the good that needs to be done and why this bill is so important. It would support victims by taking fines and criminal assets from convicted human traffickers and directing them toward services and treatment to help these victims restore their lives.

I know as a prosecutor in my former job that if people get the help they need—if they can go to a shelter and they have an alternative to a pimp—they will have a fighting chance of getting their life together again and not going back into that cycle of violence.

They also, by doing this—and we have done a lot of this in Minnesota—if we give them the support they need, then they will testify against the person who is running that sex trafficking ring, against the perpetrator. We had a 40-year sentence last year in St. Paul, MN, against someone who was running a sex trafficking ring. That was because we were able to provide the support the victims need, and that is what Senator CORNYN's bill is about. It doesn't only help victims, as I said, it also helps law enforcement and ensures that the criminals, including johns, are brought to justice under our law because a financial transaction should not mask a sexual assault or rape on a child.

I think people often think of sex trafficking as something that is just happening in another country, in another part of the world. It is, in fact, the third largest enterprise in the world. First is illegal drugs, then illegal guns, and then the illegal trafficking of people, primarily kids. That is going on in our world right now. But what people don't always expect is that in the United States, when we have sex trafficking cases, 83 percent of the victims are from our own country. Eighty-three percent of the victims are from the oil patches in North Dakota, from the streets of Minneapolis, and from the hills of West Virginia. This is happening in our country right now.

That is why this pair of bills, Senator CORNYN's bill and the bill I have—the safe harbor bill that passed through the Judiciary Committee unanimously last week—is designed to focus on domestic trafficking. It does have international implications because if we do our job and we show as a country that we take this seriously, it will help us partner with other countries.

Senator HETTKAMP, Cindy McCain, and I went down to Mexico last spring to focus on partnering with Mexico. They have been enormous help in some of the Federal prosecutions for sex trafficking rings we have had in our country—girls who have been brought across the border from Mexico. They have helped with that. We have met with the Attorney General as well as the head of their Federal Police on more work that can be done.

But just think about what is happening right now in our country. Just in the last few weeks, five St. Paul, MN, residents were charged with running a multistate sex trafficking ring. One of the alleged victims was 16 years old. Last month a man was indicted in Federal court under the leadership of our U.S. attorney in Minnesota. What was he indicted for? He was indicted for trafficking a 12-year-old girl, a young girl in Rochester, MN, who got a text that said: Come to a party. The girl shows up where she is supposed to go; it is the parking lot of a McDonald's. She gets shoved in the car, along with her friend. They are brought up to the Twin Cities. The man rapes her and takes sexually explicit pictures of her

and puts them on Craigslist. The next day she is sold to two guys, and she is raped by those two men. That happened in Minnesota. The charges were just filed.

The average age of a victim of sex trafficking is 12 years old—not old enough to go to a high school prom, not old enough to drive. That is what is happening in our country right now.

What can we do? Well, I discussed Senator CORNYN's bill and the importance of that bill. I hope we can work through these issues. There is also the other bill, the Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act. That would make sure victims of sex trafficking, like the 12-year-old Rochester girl, are treated as victims. This is a bill that passed through the Judiciary Committee. I thank 26 of my colleagues across the Senate for cosponsoring this bill. It has been an honor to work with them, with Senator CORNYN as the Republican lead.

I appreciate the help of the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Fraternal Order of Police, Shared Hope International, and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence.

This bill is different from the bill we have in front of us on the floor, but it has the same focus. What this bill does is it says: Let's look at some of these models that have worked across the country. One of them is my State, and it is called the safe harbor law. What it does is that when States do this, they basically aren't prosecuting these 12-year-old or 15-year-old girls or 16-year-old boys; they are seeing them as victims, and then they give them the kinds of services they need. A version of this bill, led by ERIK PAULSEN, one of my Republican Congressmen, passed through the House last year. I know the Presiding Officer was there at that time. So I feel good about this bill's chances in the House as well as in the Senate.

Fifteen States across the country already have these safe harbor laws, and another 12 States are making good progress in the direction that we need, so we are not starting from scratch. What the bill does is simply give incentives for States to adopt these kinds of laws.

The bill also creates a national strategy to combat human trafficking which would encourage cooperation and coordination among all the agencies that work on the problem—Federal, State, tribal, and local. Our law enforcement officers and prosecutors, as I mentioned, have to work together on this issue at all levels, but law enforcement can't do it alone. We need to make sure we are giving them the right support, and that is what this national strategy is about.

Other parts of the bill include allowing victims of sex trafficking to be eligible for the Job Corps program to help them get back on their feet.

I am also pleased to have included in this safe harbor bill, in the Stop Ex-

ploitation Through Trafficking Act, a provision that Senators WHITEHOUSE and SESSIONS worked on that got included in our bill to clarify the authority of the U.S. Marshals Service to assist local law enforcement agencies in locating missing children.

I also know Senator LEAHY and Senator COLLINS have a very important bill that I am a cosponsor of, the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act, which we would like to be considered either as a part of this bill, if we can work out these other issues, or on its own. It is a very important bill.

I have been very impressed by the bipartisan work we have done today. I was also very excited when all the women Senators, including the Presiding Officer, came together and asked for a hearing under Senator GRASSLEY's and Senator LEAHY's leadership. We had a very good hearing, and I think we can move from there.

This is one of those issues which people haven't talked about a lot in our country for a long time. I think one of the reasons it has come to the forefront is because of the Internet—something we love. More and more of these kinds of purchases can be made behind closed doors and out of the jurisdiction of any law enforcement officers if they don't see it happening. Well, that is what happened with that 12-year-old girl in Rochester; she just received a text.

This is not only going to take Congress getting the bills done, it will also take the work of the private sector. I have been impressed by the work by our hotels and transportation companies, places such as the Radisson hotels and our various transportation companies that have really stepped up and trained their employees because they are on the frontlines, they can look for problems, and they can report them to law enforcement. That is something which we can not legislate; that is something which is just happening.

I know there are a number of amendments—some I like and some I do not. I hope we can work through those as well.

I thank the Presiding Officer and thank all of those—especially Senator LEAHY, whose chair I am temporarily filling here on the floor, as he has spent a lot of time watching over this bill the last 2 days. I again thank Senator CORNYN for his good work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN PHILLIPS

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to a gentleman from Rosebud, TX, who has helped this

Senator from Utah on occasions too numerous to count and in ways impossible to measure. For over 4 years Brian Phillips has dutifully served as my communications director. As he prepares to pursue new opportunities, I want to pause and acknowledge his service to me, to my office, to the people of Utah, and to our Nation.

The role of communications director in a Senate office is not for the faint of heart nor is it for the arrogant or overconfident. Many believe the job of a communications director is to rack up style points, political positioning, and positive spin. I have learned from Brian that a true communications director is laser-focused on substance, rock solid in his principles, and devoted to creating a space for people to hear and understand a message. He has expanded my view of what communication truly is and what it can be—what it should be.

Brian brought to my office the grittiness of his Texas roots, his passion from years on the campaign trail, the wisdom of one who has been tested in tough times, and the vision of a conservative reformer who has seen the view from higher up. I am certain there were times when Brian wondered what in the world he had gotten himself into with a freshman Senator and a ragtag team from Utah. I am also certain we are all better in what we do because he was willing to stand with us.

Brian is more than a communications director. He is a trusted counselor. I trust Brian's assessment of complex situations and count on his counsel to navigate challenging circumstances and to maximize seemingly hidden opportunities. No one has prepared me better to answer hard questions or deliver vital messages at critical moments. I would put Brian's uncanny sixth sense—his "Spidey" sense, as he calls it—about what lurks around corners up against anyone's communications professional anywhere. Brian is a master at leading people into strategic thinking, sometimes through heated discussions, but always to the higher ground of meaningful dialog.

Brian is comfortable with and capable of engaging people from across the professional and personal spectrum. I have watched him work with Senators and staff, with interns and individual Utahns, jaded journalists and passionate groups of grass-roots activists. He sets everyone at ease, provides an honest assessment, pushes when needed, pulls when necessary, and through pushes, pulls, nudges, and shoves, gets everyone to the best possible place. To watch him work is extraordinary.

There are many in this town who simply look out for themselves. There are many who judge their success by their own headlines, bylines, and story lines. I am most thankful that Brian Phillips put me and my staff, along with the people of Utah and the people of this Nation, ahead of his own interests. Because he put others first, he has created a legacy that will last.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, we are here today and apparently this week to discuss legislation pending before the Senate, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

We have a serious problem in this country and around the globe in regard to human trafficking. This legislation is an issue that needs to be addressed and ought not be delayed. In fact, many from across the country are asking us to do just that, including hundreds of Kansans who are concerned about the rights of individuals, the rights of women and men across the country. Congress has legislation now pending that seems to me to be very straightforward and common sense in trying to eliminate this scourge from our country.

I want to highlight what I think is unfortunately developing in the Senate. I would refer back to the elections of November 2014, in which, I thought, at least one of the messages the American people delivered to us through their votes was a desire to see that legislation—particularly legislation such as this—be addressed, that the Senate consider it, amendments be offered, votes be taken, and ultimately legislation be approved or disapproved by the Senate. Unfortunately, we still find ourselves in a position in which we are unable to move forward on this legislation to consider amendments.

I would guess that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would indicate that when the Republicans were in the minority they from time to time blocked consideration of legislation pending. I would tell you, that in my view, when I was a participant in that process, it was because of the belief that we would have no opportunity to offer amendments to legislation then pending. What I want to see is how the Senate can process legislation, and what I want is for every Member of the Senate to have the opportunity to offer amendments, to have them considered, to be voted on, and that right should exist for every Republican Senator and every Democratic Senator. We should be in a position in which we can resolve our differences not by blocking the consideration of an important piece of legislation but by taking a vote on an amendment offered by a Senator from a State here in the United States and that the Senators have an opportunity to present their case, votes be taken, and issues be resolved. Unfortunately, we are in a position where we are even unable to consider this legislation, and I would ask that this circumstance come to an end.

Again, in my view, a message from November 2014—the last time voters spoke in the United States—was, could we at least have a Congress that can function, that can consider issues, and where votes can be cast and decisions made. We find ourselves one more time in a situation in which we are unable even to get to the bill to enable that consideration to occur.

At least as stated in the press, there is an argument about a provision in the legislation. I would again say that if there is a provision in the legislation, despite the fact that it was unanimously approved by the committee—every Republican and Democrat voted for it. And now there is this claim that they are opposed to that. If you are opposed to something, the way to solve it is not to block consideration of the bill. The way to solve it is to allow the bill to be considered, and if you oppose something in the bill, offer an amendment, have a debate, and let the votes decide here on the Senate floor whether that provision should remain in or be removed.

That provision that people are indicating is causing problems is one that is related to the public funding of abortions. It is a provision that has been law since the 1970s. It was voted on many times in the Senate, and 23 Senators voted for that provision in a spending bill in 2014—just last year.

It appears we are manufacturing problems that don't really exist. This provision was in the bill when the committee considered it, when the committee approved it. Now as we bring this bipartisan bill to the Senate floor, there are those who are saying we can't consider it because this provision is included. I would indicate that the idea of public funding—the use of taxpayer dollars to support abortion—is disapproved by 7 out of 10 Americans. This is not a radical kind of issue or proposal. But my point is that we should have the opportunity to debate this and every other item within the bill, reach a conclusion, and move forward on a piece of legislation that is important in trying to protect the lives and safety of people across our country, particularly women and children.

So my plea to my colleagues is this. Could we again get to the point where the Senate functions, where we debate bills, votes are taken, and issues of importance are considered. I hope I learn later today that is the case—that we can move forward in resolution of this legislation.

I am here to indicate I oppose public funding of abortion. I support the trafficking legislation now pending. But I will never have the opportunity to demonstrate that because we are at a point in which no legislation is able to be considered.

Madam President, I thank you for the opportunity to address the Senate.

I notice the Senator from Wyoming is on the floor, and I would be happy to yield the floor for him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I agree entirely with my friend, the Senator from Kansas, and I thank him for his leadership and thoughtful deliberation on this matter.

I would like for a moment to talk about this bill that is on the floor, S. 178, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. I have an amendment that I am offering today on human trafficking in Indian Country. I will tell you that human trafficking is widespread in Indian Country, and we have to do everything we can to stop it. Violent crime rates against women and girls in Native American communities are far higher than the national averages. This amendment delivers help to trafficking survivors and gives tribes the resources they need to battle human trafficking in their own backyards. This amendment has broad support and is a vital addition to the bill on the floor today.

My amendment would provide tribes the opportunity to access funding for recovery programs for survivors and special training for local law enforcement in order to combat human trafficking specifically in Indian Country. This amendment would allow Indian tribes to be able to compete for resources for programs to prevent human trafficking. It would provide for training for local tribal law enforcement so they would be better able to track trafficking activities. These trainings and additional resources will better equip the tribal resources to better spot human trafficking in local communities and to act quickly to respond.

This funding would also help the survivors of sex and labor trafficking in their recovery. Programs such as this assist survivors in human trafficking and enable them to begin to heal and restore their lives. The bill, S. 178, allows for more protections for victims of human trafficking in our country, and my amendment would extend those protections to the tribes in Indian Country as well.

OBAMACARE

Madam President, I noticed earlier today the minority leader as well as the minority whip on the Senate floor talking about the President's health care law.

I would like to point out that the Congressional Budget Office released a report Monday about the Obama health care law—ObamaCare. I see the White House is actually championing the report. They call it great news for America.

Let's be clear. This report contains significant amounts of bad news for people—bad news for people who signed up on the ObamaCare exchanges for getting their health insurance coverage.

In fact, the Congressional Budget Office predicts that health care premiums will increase more than 8 percent a year this coming year for ObamaCare enrollees. They also predict it will increase 8 percent next year for ObamaCare enrollees through the

exchange for the benchmark plan, and they predict it will increase another 8 percent a year after that. Most Americans can't afford to pay 8 percent more a year in premiums each and every year, which is what the Congressional Budget Office is proposing, but you don't hear the Democrats on the floor talking about that.

Wasn't it the President of the United States who said that premium rates would go down for families by \$2,500 a year?

Isn't it so that many Senators on the other side of the aisle came to the floor and said rates would go down. NANCY PELOSI said they would go down for everyone. Why are the Democrats not mentioning what the CBO is saying, that year after year after year the rates are going to go up 8 percent, another 8 percent, another 8 percent?

So we know the reality of what is happening to people all across the country, which is why this health care law continues to be unpopular, unaffordable, and unworkable. So I think it is time for the White House to stop celebrating and start thinking about the people who have been impacted specifically by this expensive and unworkable piece of legislation.

I found it interesting that on Monday, the Secretary of Health and Human Services held an event to celebrate the number of people who had signed up for coverage this year. Secretary Burwell said she was "pleased with the results to date." She repeated the administration's sound bite about the health care law working.

Well, that is not what I am hearing from people at home in Wyoming. It is not what I am hearing from my friends, neighbors, and patients. As a doctor who has been taking care of patients in Wyoming for 25 years, I talk to lots of patients every weekend at home. It is also not what I read in the papers. Papers all across the country, from the east coast to the west coast, talk about hard working Americans who have been devastated by the impacts of this terrible health care law. It seems that every day there is more bad news about more ways that ObamaCare is hurting American families and failing to live up to the many promises made by the President and the Democrats in this body who voted for it—the promises they made.

When you take a look at the Congressional Budget Office's new estimates of how many people are going to sign up for ObamaCare this year, they had originally said there would be 14 million people who would sign up for ObamaCare plans by the end of the year. Now they have dropped that number down to 11 million people. So it is not a surprise when fewer people—3 million fewer people—sign up, that it is going to cost the taxpayers less than the very high number they were expecting to have to pay. So that number has dropped, but it is because fewer people are choosing to sign up for the Obama health care plan. Is the Obama

administration pleased that the President's health care law is so much less popular with the public than the President and Democrats expected it to be?

As I talk about some of the stories that are coming out from the east to the west coast, I would like to start with a story from the Portland Press Herald newspaper in Portland, ME. On February 27, the headline was: "Many insured under Affordable Care Act taking a hit at tax time."

The article tells the story of Diana Newman, who lives in Southwest Harbor. She had ObamaCare insurance last year. She went to file her taxes a few weeks ago. The article says that "she got a \$400 surprise." That is how much she owed on her taxes specifically because of the new health care law. She told the newspaper that her tax troubles are just another stumbling block in what she said was a long, difficult year trying to figure out how to use and how to pay for her new insurance.

She said: "At the end of all this confusion, I was hit with hundreds of dollars at tax time." She said: "It's frightening."

Frightening—that is how somebody whom the President is claiming has been helped by the law is describing the impact on her life. It is frightening. It turns out she was one of almost a million people who got bad information from the government about their tax forms.

Well, that just made things more confusing for her. She said: "At this point, I don't know what to think. I may owe more, or less, or about the same."

Is the Obama administration—and all the Democrats who voted for this health care law—pleased about the way it is frightening this woman in Maine? I don't hear the Senate minority leader or the whip talking about that.

Does the administration think that ObamaCare is working for Diana Newman?

The tax preparation company H&R Block says that more than half of their clients—more than half of their clients—have had their refunds reduced because of the health care law. On average H&R Block says their customers owe the IRS an extra \$530. That is a lot of money for hard-working taxpayers. A lot of people count on getting that tax refund to help them pay their bills this time of year.

Is the Obama administration pleased to see the IRS take another \$530 from hard-working American families? Some of these people who owe money to the IRS didn't sign up for ObamaCare insurance at all last year.

Many are now finding out for the first time that they owe a tax penalty because the health care law's mandate says they have to buy health insurance and not just necessarily insurance that works for them and their family and their family's needs. Oh, no, the mandate states they have to buy insurance President Obama says works for them, even though they know it doesn't work

for them. It may be too much insurance or insurance they don't need, don't want, can't afford, and they don't have the freedom or flexibility to even make that choice. President Obama says he knows what is best for them because they don't.

The problem is that by the time many of these people figured that out, it was already too late to sign up for ObamaCare insurance for this year so now they are getting taxed—penalized. People who didn't understand the tax penalties feel as though the Obama administration has pulled a fast one on them.

Again, as we approach the 5-year anniversary, ObamaCare continues to be unpopular with the American people. There is so much anger about the timing of the tax issues that the administration had to backtrack and allow extra time for people to sign up this year.

The President made a YouTube video saying the deadline was February 15. February 15 came and went, and then the President said: Well, we better open it up again. This President is making it up as he goes along. We have seen it time and time again with this President and this law. He is making it up as he goes along.

Is the Obama administration pleased with this confusion and anger that a lot of Americans are feeling because of the IRS penalties?

It is not just Washington that is causing trouble for people who have to sign up for the President's health care. We are seeing bad news all across America.

I talked about Maine earlier. Let's go over to the other coast. Let's go to Oregon. Oregon tried to set up its own health insurance exchange. They did such an awful job that not one single person was ever able to sign up on the State Web site—not one, no one. People had to fill out paper applications if they wanted to try to buy insurance last year.

How much did it cost the State to set up this exchange where not one person was able to buy insurance from the Web site? It cost taxpayers \$248 million.

Last Friday the Governor of Oregon officially gave up. He signed a law dissolving the State exchange. Oregon will just use the Federal Government's exchange and the Federal Web site.

Does the Obama administration think that the failed Web site and the wasting of \$248 million in taxpayer money is a sign that the health care law is working? Is this administration pleased with the way Oregon's ObamaCare exchange wasted nearly one-quarter of a billion dollars? That is one State alone.

Just next door in Washington State, they are having troubles of their own. There was an article in The Hill newspaper here in Washington, DC, on February 25 titled "State's ObamaCare overcharges 13K." There were 13,000 people overcharged in the State's

ObamaCare exchange in Washington State.

According to the article, the Washington State ObamaCare exchange said it withdrew the incorrect amount of money from the bank accounts of 13,000 people. Think about that in reference to your own checking account, where there may be an automatic withdrawal based on a cable bill, cell phone bill or whatever. Many people—13,000 in this case in Washington State—had an incorrect withdrawal from the Washington State ObamaCare exchange. It says that some of the people say that more than three times the correct amount was withdrawn for their monthly premium for health insurance.

Can you imagine if the electric company or one of the utilities—your cell phone provider or your cable company—withdrew three times the amount expected from your checking account for that monthly bill. For some people that glitch in the State system probably meant their accounts were going to end up overdrawn.

Even if the States get the problem fixed right away, that is an alarming failure by that ObamaCare exchange.

Is the Obama administration pleased with the anxiety the exchange is causing 13,000 people in Washington State? These are just a few of the ways ObamaCare is not living up to the promises that Democrats and the administration made to the American people.

Later this month, on March 23, we will hit the fifth anniversary of President Obama signing this health care bill into law. If Monday's event with Secretary Burwell was any indication, the White House is going to throw a celebration. Once again they will say they are pleased and they will say ObamaCare is working. The Obama administration should not be pleased with its health care law. The Obama administration, and every Democrat who voted for it, should be embarrassed by it.

It is not what Democrats promised, and it is not what people wanted. People wanted something very simple when it came to their health care and health care reform. People want the care they need, from a doctor they choose, at a lower cost, and that is what Republicans in the Senate are planning to give them.

We can do it without a 2,000-page law, and we can do it without all of the negative side effects of ObamaCare. That will be health care reform worth celebrating.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to join Senator LEAHY, the ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary, in explaining an amendment we have filed, amendment No. 290, to the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Senators AYOTTE, MURKOWSKI, HEITKAMP, and BALDWIN for also cosponsoring our amendment and for their strong support.

Our amendment would reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs which expired in 2013. These three programs—the Street Outreach Program, the Basic Center Program, and the Transitional Living Program—have helped thousands of our homeless youth meet their immediate needs and provide long-term residential services for those who, sadly, cannot be safely reunited with their families.

The Street Outreach Program helps homeless and runaway youth find stable housing and connects them with the treatment, counseling, and crisis prevention they need. A central goal of this program is to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.

The Basic Center Program helps community-based providers meet the basic needs of shelter, food, and clothing for homeless youth.

The Transitional Living Program supports long-term housing services that help our homeless youth enter stable living environments and develop critical life skills.

The amendment Senator LEAHY and I and our cosponsors are offering complements the underlying bill by addressing prevention, intervention, and recovery services for the victims of sex trafficking—particularly among one of the most vulnerable populations, and that is our homeless youth. According to the Institute of Medicine and the National Resource Council, homelessness is one of the most common risk factors for sex trafficking. Without access to food, shelter, and social supports, homeless youth too often turn to what is termed survival sex—a way to trade sex for a place to sleep and other basic necessities. Another recent report found that one in four homeless youth are victims of sex trafficking or engaged in survival sex. Approximately 48 percent of homeless youth have done so because they did not have a safe place to stay. Our amendment strengthens the existing programs by ensuring that service providers know how to identify trafficking victims and give these youth the support they need.

In Maine, our homeless shelters are critical partners in the fight to end human trafficking. In Portland, the Preble Street Resource Center has used Runaway and Homeless Youth Act resources to connect young people who need food, safe shelter, health services, and educational support with those who can provide those services. The Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Coalition is currently helping approximately 50 trafficking victims—whose ages range from 15 to 42—start new

lives. There are more than 1.6 million homeless teens in the United States, an astonishing number. A growing number of homeless youth identify as LGBT, and it is estimated that up to 40 percent of runaway and homeless youth are LGBT. Our amendment would also ensure that those seeking services through these Federal programs are not denied assistance based on their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. All homeless young people need access to safe beds at night and services during the day so they will never have to choose between selling their bodies and a safe place to sleep.

The stand-alone bill on which our amendment is based was reported out of the Committee on the Judiciary during the last Congress with an overwhelmingly strong bipartisan vote of 15 to 3. It has the support of nearly 270 organizations, including service providers, anti-trafficking advocates, and many faith-based organizations that serve homeless youth each and every day. Covenant House, the largest service provider for runaway and homeless youth, strongly supports our reauthorization of these programs.

Let me thank Senator LEAHY for working so hard and for working to incorporate important feedback into our amendment, such as applying the non-discrimination clause only to the runaway and homeless youth programs and clarifying the continued ability to provide sex-specific shelters and programming, such as all-girls shelters or all-male shelters.

Let me take this opportunity to also commend Senator CORNYN and Senator KLOBUCHAR for their work on the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, a bill I have proudly cosponsored. The policies and tools included in this bill are important pieces of the Federal response to the horrific crime of human trafficking. Congress must do more to provide law enforcement with the tools it needs to pursue to end sex trafficking and to also support preventive programs such as the runaway and homeless youth programs that help those who fall victim to traffickers. In many ways our bill is the bookend for the bill that is pending on the Senate floor because it focuses on the service end in helping those who are most vulnerable, our young people.

By providing homeless young people with the support and services they need, we can help prevent them from ever being trafficked in the first place. The runaway and homeless youth programs have provided a lifeline and housing for America's homeless and for its human trafficked youth for 40 years. They are a vital tool in addressing these serious problems. I urge my colleagues to support our bipartisan amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to thank the distinguished senior

Senator from Maine, my New England neighbor, for her comments, speaking on Leahy-Collins amendment No. 290. She and I and others have worked on this for a very long time. In her comments, she talked about shelters for homeless teens, and I think about how much better this whole country would be if this homeless teen could turn to a shelter and not to a trafficker.

As I said earlier on the floor, traffickers often find their victims soon after they runaway or become homeless.

In a couple of States, such as mine and the Senator from Maine's, especially at this time of year, people need shelter or they die. They literally die in a relatively short period of time from the cold.

We see what happens. Listen to the stories of these trafficking survivors. Many of them began as a homeless or runaway teen. They are scared, desperate for affection, for food, for safety, and for a safe place to sleep.

Our children and our grandchildren don't have to be scared. They have a safe place to sleep. They have food. But for a lot of these runaways, that is not the case.

That is a problem we can fix. We can reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. We can ensure that no child is turned away, regardless of their religion or their race or whom they love. A child is a child is a child. They all deserve our protection.

We don't say: OK, you four homeless children, we will take care of you but not you because you are the wrong race or you are the wrong religion or you love the wrong person. So you have to just stay out and be prey to the traffickers.

We will recount some of the stories I told before, the traffickers I prosecuted years ago and the horrible stories. I know the distinguished Senator from Maine has heard these stories, and she has visited these shelters. She has seen and heard the stories. When you do, it tears your heart. So I hope the amendment that she, Senator MURKOWSKI, I, and others have written will be in the final bill when it is passed. I thank my friend from Maine for her hard work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I am just going to say that I know the distinguished Senators from Vermont and Maine have been on the floor talking about an amendment they hope to offer to this anti-trafficking bill. But the sad fact is that no one is going to get to offer any amendments to this bill unless the Democratic leader, Sen-

ator REID, decides that we are going to have an open amendment process because right now there are objections to anyone setting any of the amendments for votes, much less asking to set aside the pending amendment and making your amendment the pending amendment so it could be considered and scheduled for a vote.

I wish to make sure our colleagues understand the rationale because I have had conversations with a number of members of the Judiciary Committee, which voted unanimously to support this bill. That doesn't happen very often, that we have that kind of unanimous support. Ten of our Democratic colleagues are cosponsors on the original bill.

So it might sound strange that after 10 Democrats have cosponsored the bill, after all of the Republicans and all of the Democrats on the Judiciary Committee have voted to support this bill—and the minority leader, Senator REID, has agreed to dispense with the normal procedural process to get the bill on the floor—that we would now have this unusual situation where this bill is being hijacked and being used to debate something that it really doesn't have very much to do about, and that is the subject of abortion.

Some of our colleagues raised this issue yesterday for the first time, and they said they were surprised to find some language in the bill that limited the use of the funds in this bill consistent with the Hyde amendment. The Hyde amendment is a prohibition against using taxpayer funds for abortion, and it has been the law of the land for 39 years—39 years. All our bill does is preserve the status quo when it comes to the Hyde amendment.

Then, all of a sudden, some of our colleagues woke up I guess yesterday morning and discovered this and said that they were outraged and that it was totally unacceptable. Well, when we offered them an opportunity to offer an amendment to change that, they said: No, we don't want an amendment. We don't want to change it by a vote of the Senate. We just want to block the bill. We want to kill the bill.

Unless something changes between now and the time we vote on cloture on the bill, that is what is going to happen because they don't want to amend the bill; they don't want to allow others the opportunity—such as the Senator from Maine and the Senator from Vermont—to amend the bill; they just want to kill the bill.

It really is baffling to me, on a topic we all ought to agree is an important one, where some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society—children who have been sex-trafficked—would be the beneficiaries of the bill, that we are for some reason debating a provision in the bill that was in the bill when 10 Democrats agreed to cosponsor it, when all members of the Judiciary Committee, including those same Democrats, agreed to vote for the bill, and when the Democratic leader agreed

to bring it to the floor unanimously by a vote of the Senate. All of a sudden we want to try to revisit a provision that has been the law of the land for 39 years.

I hope something happens between now and the end of the week that causes some of our friends to reconsider this idea that they are going to filibuster this bill which many of them cosponsored and for which many of them voted. It would be a real shame and a tragedy if something that was designed to help these vulnerable kids was killed in the Senate because this became a political football. That would be a shame.

I know the distinguished Senator from Utah is on the floor and ready to speak.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I will speak for a few seconds on what the distinguished Senator from Texas said.

It would be absolutely pathetic if this bill were stopped—a bill this important that means so much to our families and to our children—because of the long-term language that has been, as I say, for 39 years—I can't believe this Senate has become so political that we would raise that issue at this time on this bill that almost everybody with any brains at all would be for. I would be ashamed of myself. And then not be willing to bring up an amendment if they don't like the language, go through the regular order, and act like the Senate and act like Senators—it is pathetic. What have we come to around here that we are so doggone partisan that we can't even pass a bill to protect children? I think it is pathetic, is all I can say.

UKRAINE

Madam President, in my nearly 40 years of public service, I have become very concerned with the state of our national security.

From the firestorm of terrorism that has swept Syria and Iraq, to the looming specter of a nuclear Iran, our Nation faces yet another potential catastrophe in Ukraine, where Russian separatists and soldiers continue their drive to consume as much of that nation as President Putin desires. It is particularly vexing that each of these catastrophes could have been prevented or at least greatly mitigated had the instigators of these events believed that the United States intended to use its national power to deter and, if necessary, repulse those seeking to use aggression against our national interests.

As I mentioned before, Ukraine is the latest example. Almost 1 year ago Russian forces seized and then annexed the Crimean peninsula. Ever since then, Russian separatists and Russian forces have snapped up large parts of eastern Ukraine.

Until last year, the areas controlled by Russian separatists and Russian forces could be loosely grouped into two areas along the Russian border—

specifically, a northern area around the city of Luhansk and a southern area around the city of Donetsk. In between these two Russian-controlled areas lies the town called Debaltseve, which is a vital transportation hub. By seizing this strategic town, Russia can transport troops and supplies more easily between the Russian-controlled areas in the north and the South.

However, after weeks of fighting in and around Debaltseve, a ceasefire called Minsk II was brokered. Unfortunately, as many realists warned, Minsk II was not worth the paper it was written on. Predictably, 72 hours after the ceasefire was signed, Russian forces violated the protocol and Ukrainian soldiers retreated from the town under heavy fire.

Adding insult to injury, President Putin was quoted by the New York Times, after the fall of Debaltseve, saying:

Life is life. It just goes on. No need to dwell on it.

What is the response of the United States to this aggression? Well, until today the only concrete action, as reported by ABC News, is that the administration has decided to send fewer than 10 soldiers to western Ukraine to provide combat medical training to Ukrainian forces. This would not be so laughable if I did not believe the Ukrainians will require far greater medical assistance if Russian aggression continues unabated. But now that Russian-backed forces have solidified their control over whole swathes of eastern Ukraine, what comes next? Will Mr. Putin be appeased and go home? I very much doubt it. Recent reports indicate that both sides have moved some heavy weapons away from the battlefield; nevertheless, I believe this could just be a lull in the storm.

As I mentioned earlier, Russian forces have annexed Crimea, which is a peninsula between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. To supply their forces in Crimea, Russians must fly over or cross a narrow strip of water between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov called the Kerch Strait. But if Russians controlled the land between Crimea and the Russian border, they could ship those supplies more efficiently and at lower cost. This stretch of land, of course, is Ukrainian sovereign territory. Therefore, it is very possible that the Russians will move to conquer this region to establish a land corridor between Russia and Crimea.

Many military experts believe this is Russia's objective since Russian-backed separatists have intensified their military activities around the port city of Mariupol.

The New York Times reports that the city "is a bustling port in a strategic location on the Sea of Azov, near the Russian border."

Mariupol is the only major obstacle to the Russians realizing a long-held goal of opening a land route between Russia and Crimea and taking complete control of the Sea of Azov and its rich industrial infrastructure.

In addition, the highly regarded Institute for the Study of War has noted that a village approximately 8 miles from Mariupol has "become the most actively contested area" in the region.

So what has been our response to this aggression? How is this administration preserving what is arguably one of the greatest American national security accomplishments in the past 100 years—ensuring a safe, secure and democratic Europe? Well, to be honest, not much.

Before the events of the past 12 months, this administration's Polyanina policy toward Russia was defined by the so-called reset. It was my impression this policy was designed to convince the Russians we were not a threat and therefore we should work together for the common good. Unfortunately, the Russians exploited the former and did not give a darn about the latter.

Then, as the situation in Crimea and eastern Ukraine continued to grow more dire, we instituted a series of economic sanctions—first against Russian officials, then later against banks and businesses associated with Putin's cronies. These economic sanctions have grown against a number of key Russian energy, banking, and defense firms. To be fair, today the administration announced a modest increase in the number of individuals to which economic sanctions will be directed against.

However, one would be hard-pressed to call these sanctions robust. Individuals' assets were frozen and companies find it harder to raise capital, but they are hardly enough to make Mr. Putin think twice before proceeding to use force against his next objective.

What about our diplomatic efforts? As the Congressional Research Service has stated, "The administration has appeared to leave the leading role in negotiating such a [peace] settlement [regarding Ukraine] to France and Germany."

What about U.S. military aid? According to the Congressional Research Service, the United States has allocated \$120 million in security assistance so far. Today our government announced a modest increase in aid. Of the aid previously announced, funds were used for body armor, helmets, vehicles, night and thermal vision devices, heavy engineering equipment, advanced radios, patrol boats, rations, tents, countermortar radars, uniforms, and first aid equipment and supplies. Glaringly absent from this list are the pieces of equipment that could tilt the balance of power and change Mr. Putin's calculations. Specifically, where are the intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, heavy weapons and logistics assets?

What is the administration's response? Just this week Brian McKeon, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy stated—more than 1 year after the Russian invasion of Crimea—that the Obama administration is "still working in the inter-agency group on reviewing a number of

options including lethal defensive weapons, but I can't give you a timetable on when we might have a decision on additional assistance."

That is pathetic. By any measure that is pathetic. I am flabbergasted not only by Mr. McKeon's comment but the thought that the administration believes anyone would see that as a legitimate answer.

In other areas, what about the deployment of more U.S. military units to Europe to reassure our allies? While the United States has deployed some troops to the region, that is not enough to convince Moscow this administration is determined to give a resolute response to further Russian aggression.

Specifically, the initial deployment of U.S. land forces were in company-size units. A company-size unit has less than 150 soldiers, an insufficient force to amount to an effective deterrent. Then the administration announced that a single armored brigade—which consists of less than 100 tanks—would be deployed on a rotational basis. Once again, this is a relatively small force to deter what historically has been one of the great land armies.

Deterrence comes through strength. The world has changed since the fall of the Berlin Wall, but it appears this has been lost on President Putin. Indeed, it appears President Obama believes the world has changed more than it has. Regardless, the United States must take more forceful and dynamic actions. Otherwise, our policy of appeasement could result in more than just the loss of eastern Ukraine.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I thought I might take just a few minutes during this lull in our schedule. If other Senators come down to talk, I will yield to them, but I would like to talk a little about what is in this piece of legislation—the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. While I am on the Judiciary Committee and the Senator from Vermont is on the Judiciary Committee—he has worked together with me and others on this piece of legislation—I am aware of the fact there are many Senators for whom this is a relatively new topic and who have not been as immersed in it.

First, I would just say by way of major support that there are 200 victims' rights groups and law enforcement organizations that have endorsed this legislation—200 of them. I am looking forward to having a conference call with them this afternoon, where I can explain to them how we are currently stuck and to solicit their help in getting us unstuck so we can hopefully move this legislation along, have an

open amendment process, and working with our colleagues in the House, send this important piece of legislation to the President.

As I said, more than 200 victims' rights and law enforcement organizations have endorsed this legislation, including Shared Hope International, Rights4Girls, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Children's Alliance, the National Criminal Justice Association, the End Child Prostitution and Trafficking organization, PROTECT, Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking, the National Association of Police Organizations, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the National District Attorneys Association.

I read that rather long list of supporting organizations to point out there is nothing political about this particular bill. This is neither a Republican bill nor a Democratic bill. This is, I think, in the best traditions of the Senate, the Congress, when Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle work together to come up with a policy solution that makes sense and that will help.

One of the key features of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act is the creation of a special Crime Victims Compensation Fund. It is called the Domestic Trafficking Victims Fund.

When I had the honor of serving as attorney general of Texas, we had a Crime Victims Compensation Fund—much like I suspect most States have—where people who commit crimes and who pay fines and penalties pay into that fund, and those moneys are then distributed on a grant basis by the State to help organizations such as the Court Appointed Special Advocates Groups—CASA—which I worked closely with as attorney general, and a number of crime victims' groups and other survivors of crime.

What we do is use that same model here. We take the money that is paid by people convicted of human trafficking, sexual abuse, child pornography, child sexual exploitation, interstate transportation for illegal sexual activity, commercial human smuggling, and we require a special additional assessment of \$5,000 upon conviction for any one of this class of crimes.

In other words, one of the things we are trying to do is move from this model of just dealing with the supply side of a problem and deal with the demand side. We are trying to focus on the people who purchase these illicit services from trafficking victims and then use that fund to do some good, to provide grants to various faith-based organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and the like that help treat the victims of child trafficking and hopefully help them begin to heal once they are rescued from their abusers and their assailants.

The other thing we do, sort of from a structural point of view, is we don't

treat a young girl who has been trafficked as the criminal. In other words, in the past there has been a tendency to say we are going to arrest the 15-year-old girl and charge her for being a prostitute, when in fact she has no choice in the matter. She is being compelled by either violence or some other coercive means to do what she is doing. So it is not a voluntary act on her part.

So what we do is we don't treat them as a criminal. We treat the purchaser of these services as the criminal. We fine them. We use that money then to supply services to help that victim get rescued and get better, to heal, and to get on with their lives.

That is what is a little different here because we are not actually using tax dollars. We are using the fines and the penalties assessed against these perpetrators to help these victims heal once they are rescued. That is one of the most important parts of this bill.

We expect there would be roughly \$30 million a year available for that out of this bill alone. That would be in addition to other things we are doing and other things that are being done at the local and State level.

We also make sure that we clarify the benefits and protections offered to victims of domestic human trafficking. Under current law, U.S. citizens are sometimes placed at a disadvantage when seeking services to restore them to their well-being and to offer them protection. But now we would make sure that those services are available without regard to citizenship and would make sure that people who would otherwise not get benefits will get benefits. This disparity in certification has led to some confusion, as we might imagine.

For example, under current law, a young person who has been trafficked from Central America through Mexico and into the United States would be eligible for a temporary visa while they cooperate with law enforcement because that testimony would be essential to convict the person who trafficked them. This clarifies that U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents should never be denied services due to the fact that they have not received that kind of special certification. It is a little technical, but it is an important area.

We also provide child human trafficking deterrence block grants paid entirely through the Crime Victims Compensation Fund I mentioned a moment ago. These funds would be granted to qualifying organizations based on their focus on victim rescue and restoration.

Collaboration among law enforcement, social services, emergency responders, children's advocacy centers, victims service providers, and nonprofits would be encouraged to help communities and government work together to develop a holistic approach to figure out what works best to protect these victims of trafficking and to serve victims.

It also would create a new purpose area under the Victims of Child Abuse Act for the 900 children's advocacy centers across the country that provide restorative services for victims of child pornography, and it requires that not less than \$2 million a year be dedicated to this purpose.

In my experience, in Texas, the children's advocacy centers are some of the most outstanding organizations that exist for the treatment of victims of abuse and trafficking. One of the key features in the children's advocacy centers that I have visited is—imagine that a child who has been assaulted or a victim of human trafficking is not only going to be terrified by the experience, but they are also terrified by the law enforcement authorities who try to question them and to get evidence so they can make a case and conviction against the person who did harm to the child. The children's advocacy centers do an amazing job of creating a more relaxed atmosphere, where law enforcement and social service providers can work together in an environment where a child does not feel threatened and where the child can actually not only begin to get better but also cooperate with law enforcement authorities and provide more reliable testimony and evidence that can be used to convict the perpetrators.

Also in the bill, we would amend the human trafficking asset forfeiture statute to track the asset forfeiture statute for money laundering and eliminate the need for prosecutors to show direct traceability to the underlying crime and the targeted proceeds when they can show that the assets involved in the crime are used to conceal the source of criminal assets. This is basically taking another provision of current law. I realize that the whole issue of asset forfeiture, when taken to the extreme—I know Chairman GRASSLEY is interested in holding hearings on the subject. But I think the part of this which is not controversial is taking the assets used in the commission of a crime and forfeiting that by the perpetrator, again, using those funds in part to help their victims get better.

We also have a provision in the bill that would allow for the streamlining of criminal investigations of human trafficking.

Under current law, State and local law enforcement may obtain a wiretap warrant in State court upon showing that the investigation may provide evidence of murder, kidnapping, gambling, robbery, bribery, extortion or dealing with narcotic drugs, including marijuana or other dangerous drugs, or other crimes dangerous to life, limb or property and punishable by imprisonment for more than 1 year.

What we would do here is provide additional tools for law enforcement to conduct lawful wiretaps in order to get evidence important to convicting the perpetrators of these terrible crimes.

We also would require better reporting of this terrible crime of human

trafficking. I remember a few years ago, when the Super Bowl was in Dallas, actually working with local law enforcement there where I learned for the first time that, unfortunately, at the same time that the Super Bowl is held in different cities around the country, there is a spike in the amount of trafficking that occurs in conjunction with these huge public events. That was quite an eye-opening experience for me.

Part of what we need to do is to get the facts, and to make sure that human trafficking is treated as the serious crime that it is for purposes of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program. This legislation would encourage law enforcement to investigate and report human trafficking activity by classifying this as a part I violent crime and requiring it to be included in the calculation of index crime rates—again, making sure we understand what the facts are, because I think the fact is that so much of this crime and this sort of activity is hidden from public view. So most Americans probably don't know that this sort of activity goes on in their cities, in their States, and across the country. This would help us deal with that.

Under another provision of the bill, we would also make sure we use existing task forces to target offenders who exploit children, and we would, in particular, target child predators.

One of the things we learn, as we get deeper into this topic, is the sad fact that somebody who sexually abuses a child is likely to do it more than once. In other words, these twisted individuals unfortunately are going to commit crime after crime after crime until they are caught and taken out of commission.

This is one reason why I feel so strongly that we had to eliminate the rape kit backlogs around the country, and we worked closely with a courageous woman named Debbie Smith to reauthorize the Debbie Smith Act to make sure the money that Congress appropriated for the rape kit backlog was adequately funded. Due to the power of DNA testing, we can identify people who commit these serial offenses, and law enforcement can connect the dots better and at the same time exonerate people who have perhaps been falsely accused because they are excluded through a DNA test through this rape kit backlog elimination effort.

So trying to make sure we take these serial offenders off the streets is a priority under our bill.

As I said, we worked very closely with a number of colleagues, including the Senator from Vermont, the Senator FEINSTEIN of California, Senator COONS, Senator WYDEN, and Senator KLOBUCHAR on the other side. On our side, we have had a lot of great effort by Senator PORTMAN and Senator KIRK, among others. Senator COLLINS has certainly made important contributions. But I wish to particularly recognize the contributions by the Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN.

We added a second title, title II in the legislation, entitled "Combating Human Trafficking." Senator FEINSTEIN was the person who made that major contribution to this effort.

My point is that this has really been a bipartisan collaborative effort—something we don't see enough of here in Washington, DC—untainted by politics and ideology, where we are actually trying to do some good for people who need our help the most.

Senator FEINSTEIN contributed much of the meat of title II, including amendments to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, response to victims of child trafficking provision, creating an interagency task force report on child trafficking primary prevention and also requiring a General Accountability Office report to Congress that includes information on Federal and State law enforcement agencies to combat trafficking in the United States and requiring that it include information on each available grant program intended to combat human trafficking or assist victims of trafficking.

On our side of the aisle, I mentioned that one of the people who has been a relentless warrior on this has been our friend the junior Senator from Illinois, Mr. KIRK, who contributed the HERO Act to this legislation. That is title III under the HERO Act.

Under that important part of the legislation that makes up this overall bill, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, the HERO Act would provide express statutory authorization for the existing ICE Cyber Crimes Center—Immigration and Customs Enforcement—recognizing that so much of what happens in terms of the marketing and the solicitation for people to engage in these crimes occurs now on the Internet.

I had the privilege of being here with the Senator from Illinois on the floor yesterday afternoon, and he talked about this one particular site that has been responsible for the trafficking of so much human flesh, mainly in the form of minor children, and his efforts to combat that. But part of what the HERO Act would do is to make sure that we have this powerful tool in the fight against sexual exploitation of children and the production, advertisement, and distribution of child pornography and child sex tourism—if you can imagine such a thing.

The HERO Act would also authorize the Cyber Crimes Center to collaborate with the Department of Defense and the National Association to Protect Children for the purpose of recruiting, training, and hiring wounded and transitioning military veterans to serve as law enforcement officials in the investigation and prosecution of these crimes. This child exploitation section uses sophisticated investigative tools to target violators who operate on the Internet, which has been one of the primary focuses of the Senator from Illinois in his efforts, targeting the use of Web sites, email chat rooms, and file-sharing applications.

Major initiatives, including Operation Predator, an Immigration and Customs Enforcement office within the Department of Homeland Security's flagship investigative initiative for targeting sexual predators, child pornographers, and child sex.

It includes the National Child Victim Identification System, which was developed to assist law enforcement agencies in identifying victims of child sexual exploitation, and the virtual global task force and international alliance of law enforcement agencies working together to fight online child exploitation and abuse.

I realize this has been rather lengthy, but I thought it was worth making sure that all of our colleagues and anybody within the sound of my voice who cared to listen understood what was in this important piece of legislation, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

To summarize, 200 organizations across the country who are focused like a laser on the bane and evil that child sex trafficking is have endorsed this legislation. The original piece of legislation had 10 Democratic cosponsors, about an equal number—perhaps; I can't remember the exact number—of Republican cosponsors, and it passed by unanimous vote of the Senate Judiciary Committee in February.

Coming to the floor, we had something that hadn't happened often enough, in my view, which was that Democrats and Republicans together agreed to bypass the usual cumbersome procedure to get a bill to the floor, known as cloture, and we all agreed we should take up this bill together. That is when things went off the rails, sadly. But I am an optimistic person and I am hopeful cooler heads will prevail.

I have had some private conversations with a number of Senators who are really very disturbed by the possibility that legislation as important as this is to the victims of human trafficking might be kicked to the curb because of some phony diversion and argument about restrictions on funding.

Again, the provisions of this bill that limit the use of the funds under the Hyde amendment has been the law of the land for 39 years. It was originally started in 1976. Basically, the Hyde amendment says that no taxpayer funds may be used for abortion services. This has been one of the rare areas in an area of great controversy—the subject of abortion—where Congress has come together on a bipartisan basis to say we are going to draw a bright line there to say no matter what your views are on abortion, we are not going to allow taxpayer funds to be used for abortion. Again, that started in 1976 and it has been the law of the land since that time.

Every appropriations bill that has passed, including the CROmnibus, the continuing resolution omnibus bill that was passed last fall in the lame-duck session of Congress, included a restriction known as the Hyde amendment restriction in it. As a matter of

fact, we specifically referenced that provision in the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

So you could imagine my surprise when I think it was yesterday that I got calls, letters, and heard speeches that people were surprised—shocked—that this provision was in the legislation when it was filed in January—I think January 13—and made public to the world. If anybody thought it was hidden, it was hidden in plain sight to anybody who cared to read it. And to me, what was so surprising about some of the reaction is that this maintains the status quo. This doesn't change anything, and has been the law of the land for 39 years since the original Hyde amendment was adopted.

So my hope is we can break out of this terrible cycle of dysfunction which I think, frankly, reflects Congress in a very negative light. I certainly hear it back home in Texas. People say: Well, can't you all get along? Can't you do anything? They don't want us to compromise our principles, and we won't. I don't think we should. But there are so many areas like this where we are united together in trying to do everything we can to help law enforcement investigate and prosecute human trafficking and to help the victims of human trafficking to heal after they are rescued—to heal, get better, and to get on with their lives. That is all this legislation does.

I say that is all. That is a pretty big deal. It provides \$30 million a year—not tax dollars. These are fines and penalties paid by the people who commit these terrible crimes. It provides \$30 million a year as funds that can go toward grants to faith-based organizations, child advocacy centers—you name it—organizations that will spend their lives trying to help these children try to get better and get on with their lives. That money is available to them.

But if we don't pass this bill this week, that is not going to happen. How tragic it would be if somehow we let the politics of the day and this feigned outrage over a provision that has been a law of the land for 39 years derail us from doing our job.

I have every confidence that the heart of every Member of this body is in the right place when it comes to trying to help these victims of human trafficking. I just ask us to get our heads screwed on right. I know our hearts are in the right place, but frankly I am a little worried about people's heads not being screwed on right when it comes to focusing on a solution that is within our reach and one that has I think enjoyed so much support all across the country—as I mentioned, more than 200 victims rights and law enforcement organizations across the country. I am looking forward in probably the next 10 minutes or so joining a conference call with various members of these organizations, where I can update them on where they are and basically ask them for their help.

Call your Senator. Call your Congressman. Tell them we need to get

this done, because in all likelihood tomorrow we are going to have a very important vote in the Senate.

I said I wasn't going to get mired down in procedure, but we do have an important vote tomorrow which is called a cloture vote. In other words, in order to get to a final passage of this bill, we need to have at least 60 Senators out of 100 vote for ending debate on the bill. That is called a cloture vote. But if we don't have 60 Senators vote to end debate on this bill, then basically we are dead in the water.

We have 54 Senators on our side of the aisle. There are 46 on the other side of the aisle. You would think on a bill that does as much as this bill does for the victims of human trafficking and that is so devoid of politics that we could get 60 votes or more. I wish we could get 100 votes to close off debate and finally pass this bill. If we did that in short order, I know we could work with our colleagues in the House of Representatives, who have already passed a similar although a little bit different bill, to try to reconcile those two pieces of legislation and get them to President Obama's desk for his signature. The sooner we do that, the sooner these victims of human trafficking will get the help they need that this bill would provide.

So I hope that Senators will think long and hard about their vote on closing off debate tomorrow and getting us to the finish line on this legislation. Again, we don't need everybody. We don't need 100 Senators to vote to close off debate tomorrow, but we do need 60. If we don't get 60, this bill is going to be dead in the water.

I would ask all of our colleagues to examine their conscience and to think about what we are doing here and how much good we could do if we come together. I know from talking to some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, they have had some sleepless nights. Several of our colleagues have said they basically have had a hard time sleeping thinking about the human tragedy reflected in human trafficking, and they worried whether we will actually be able to get this bill over the finish line. I hope and pray we will. We will find out tomorrow.

This is something that is in our hands. We can't control a lot of things in the world, but we can control whether we produce 60 votes here in the Senate tomorrow to close off debate, to get to final passage by a majority vote in the Senate. And if we can, then we are going to be able to expedite the help these victims of human trafficking need. We are going to be able to make sure the predators who prey on innocent children and other victims of human trafficking pay the price, but that out of that bad comes some good when children are rescued and these victims begin the process of healing.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I was stunned a few minutes ago to hear the assistant Republican leader on the floor speaking about trafficking legislation that is now before the Senate. I am glad he is speaking about the legislation. He has done that quite a bit. But as he spoke about the bill, it is very stunning what he said.

He said:

This bill is being hijacked and being used to debate something that it really doesn't have very much to do about, and that is the subject of abortion.

I totally agree with my friend from Texas. This bill has been hijacked by an issue completely unrelated to human trafficking.

I suggest that the majority take it out. We can debate on how it is in the bill. Some said that it was by sleight of hand, and some said that the Democratic staff should have seen that it was in there. It is in there, and it has to come out.

Unless that language is taken out of the bill, there will be no bill. We cannot have this legislation hijacked by an abortion issue.

My friend the President pro tempore of the Senate and the chairman of the Finance Committee said:

I can't believe that this Senate has become so political that we would raise that issue at this time on this bill.

"Raise the issue"—he took the words right out of my mouth. I can't believe it either.

I say to my friends the majority, take the abortion language out of the bill. It has nothing to do with abortion.

I hope my Republican friends will choose to do the right thing and eliminate this unrelated issue on an otherwise good piece of legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I wish to talk about a couple of amendments on the legislation that we are considering this week, which is the human trafficking legislation.

Up to this point, this has been a bipartisan exercise. In fact, Senator BLUMENTHAL, the Senator from Connecticut, and I started a caucus here in the Senate on human trafficking about 3½ years ago, understanding that there was an increasing concern and awareness about this issue around the country, and we wanted to bring colleagues together to talk about the issue. We now have many other Members of the Senate who are a part of that.

We had monthly meetings—holding up people who were doing great things around the country—describing the problem so that all of us, Members of the Senate and their staff, understand the seriousness of this issue and why we need to address it. That has always

been nonpartisan—not just bipartisan but nonpartisan.

I think it is time for us to move forward with this debate and to have these amendments offered and to actually vote on this legislation that would help to deal with this problem all around the country, and unfortunately it is everywhere.

Often people think that this is an international issue, that the only human trafficking concern we should have would be in Africa or Asia or other countries. But it actually happens right here, and it happens in my home State of Ohio.

I first became involved in this issue when a school outside the city of Toledo came to me and told me their concern about it and how these young people were getting involved and engaged in it. The more we learned, the more I looked into it, and the more I realized this is something which is very real in the communities I represent in Ohio, and unfortunately I believe the same is true in every State represented in this Chamber.

We have had an interesting debate so far. Sometimes we have gotten a little sidetracked, such as the issue we saw a moment ago, but for the most part I have been pleased that over the last few days we have talked about the scope of the problem, talked about some of the solutions to it, and we talked about some of the good legislation that is in the underlying bill.

There are two pieces of legislation that I offered that are part of the underlying bill, and I am happy about that. They are both bipartisan amendments. There are also a couple of amendments that I think would be helpful for us to include in the legislation. I offered those amendments earlier this week with the hopes that they would have already been considered. They have not been considered yet, but I hope to move forward with this legislation. The longer we wait, the more difficult it becomes for us to move forward. I hope we can resolve whatever differences there are and go ahead and start voting on amendments and moving this legislation forward so we can actually help those victims of trafficking who are looking for our support. Again, if we are not going to act here in the Senate and are not going to move this forward in the House and get it to the President for signature—every day more and more people are in danger, particularly children, of falling into the hands of human traffickers.

AMENDMENT NO. 270

I have a couple of amendments I wish to talk about briefly today. The first amendment is called Ensuring a Better Response for Victims of Sex Trafficking. This amendment contains a piece of the legislation I actually offered a couple of years ago with Senator WYDEN of Oregon. Senator WYDEN's legislation and my legislation called the Child Sex Trafficking Data and Response Act was partly enacted into law last year, and that was the

data part of the bill—in other words, the part of the bill that relates to how we needed to improve the information we are getting on sex trafficking so we can better address the problem. Law enforcement officials have been looking for better information around the country. They want to know what the best practices are and how to deal with it. It is important to understand the problem in order to come up with solutions.

Now we need to get to the second part of the legislation that was not enacted last year, and that is on the response portion. The amendment does just that. The response portion of the bill changes the way we treat victims of sex trafficking. Right now many of these victims are falling between the cracks. Currently children are only eligible for help through the child welfare system if they are abused by their parents. Currently, because children are only allowed to be eligible for help in that category, some kids just cannot get the help they need. This legislation ensures that all children who are trafficked are considered victims of sexual abuse and can be eligible for services as they go through what is sometimes a long and arduous process of recovery.

AMENDMENT NO. 271

The second amendment I wish to include gets at some of the underlying problems that make it more likely that a child will be trafficked. We heard a lot about this on the floor the last couple of days. I have talked about it in terms of our missing children. One of the elements of the underlying bill is a bill we put forward in the last couple of years on how to identify missing children. Why? Because those children who are runaways or go missing tend to be some of the most vulnerable to sex traffickers. So the idea is to get the best information we can on those kids as soon as possible so we can find them.

As an example, there have been about 67 kids who have gone missing in Ohio in the last month and a half. Yet we only have records for, I believe, 26 kids in terms of photographs. This legislation would require photographs for all of these kids so that the kids who are not currently able to be found because we can't find a photograph of them can be more easily found—not just by law enforcement but by citizens who are being vigilant and diligent.

There is another issue, too, and it is something that is addressed in this amendment, which is cosponsored by Senator FEINSTEIN. The first one is one from a Wyden-Portman amendment, and this is from a Feinstein-Portman amendment. These are bipartisan bills.

It currently is true that there is an over-narrow definition of "homelessness" by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that does not enable homeless kids to get the help they need. That is current law. We are trying to change that to ensure that we can expand that definition to include the kinds of children who unfortunately many times are vulnerable to trafficking.

I will give an example of the scope of this problem. During this last school year—2 years ago, 2012 to 2013—there were 24,236 kids in Ohio who were homeless at one point during the school year; however, the Federal Department responsible for preventing child homelessness counted only 4,700 cases. So we have over 24,000 kids who are homeless; yet this Department says only 4,700. In other words, the very program meant to help these kids undercounted by a factor of five. So the amendment simply updates the definition of “homelessness” to ensure that these kids are not forgotten and do not fall between the cracks.

We know this action alone will not end child homelessness, but it will help deal with this problem and will help to put a roof over their heads, for thousands of these kids and their families, and prevent some of the long-term emotional, developmental effects that are caused by homelessness, as well as keep these kids off the streets and hopefully away from these traffickers so they are not vulnerable, as I said, to being sex-trafficked.

We hope for a day when every single child in America is protected, when every child is able to follow their dreams and can live in a home with a family who is protecting and watching over them. We know that if we are going to see that hope realized, we have to fight for it. In the meantime, we have important work to do here on the floor of the Senate to ensure that we are doing everything we possibly can to protect these kids.

These two amendments will help make this underlying legislation even stronger. I hope my colleagues will support both of them. Again, I hope we can now get over whatever is holding up movement on these amendments, get the amendments enacted into law, and get the bill over to the House of Representatives. And I believe they will pass it and get it to the President for his signature so we can indeed begin to address this horrific practice of human trafficking.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator CORNYN for his important leadership on this issue. I thank Senator KLOBUCHAR, whom I have enjoyed working with on a related bill, the Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act, which I hope will also be considered during the course of this debate.

We must commit to eliminating all forms of modern-day slavery and human trafficking. These are horrendous crimes that undermine the most basic human right of freedom and sadly target the most vulnerable and at-risk individuals in our society.

For too long we in the United States have assumed this is a problem for others but not for ourselves. We heard heartbreaking stories of the underground trafficking of humans but believed this was a tragedy unique to

places in the world where a poor economy and weak rule of law allow vulnerable women and children to fall into these unspeakable circumstances. This is no longer the case. Reports and research have brought this crime out of the dark here at home, revealing that trafficking in humans is a reality in our own States and communities. Ignorance and denial are no longer options.

I am proud to support the legislation we are considering today which would improve services and restitution available to victims of human trafficking. It would make changes to our criminal law to allow law enforcement to hold accountable those offenders who perpetrate these heinous crimes and also better protect those at risk of becoming victims.

I am proud to say that my home State of Arizona has been a leader on this issue. In April 2013 then-Governor Jan Brewer launched a task force on human trafficking which brought together local policymakers, law enforcement, nonprofits, think tanks, and universities in Arizona to examine the issue and explore ways to reduce trafficking and protect victims. The work of this task force led to these results: In 2014 the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was established to build on the efforts of the task force in the longer term by improving the State's awareness of human trafficking, promoting cooperation among law enforcement, State agencies, and the community, and improving victims' services.

The task force yielded legislative accomplishments. Based on recommendations of the task force, Arizona passed a law in April 2014 that increased penalties for traffickers, makes it easier for prosecutors to hold accountable those engaged in prostitution with a minor, and protects victims' identities in criminal proceedings.

In an effort to equip those who are in a position to intervene, the members of the task force have worked to improve training for social workers, health care providers, and probation officers, among others. These efforts provide them with the knowledge and tools needed to stop this exploitation and connect victims with resources to help.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention the hard work of my wife Cindy to bring attention to the suffering of those who are victims of human trafficking. She has dedicated herself to their cause, and through her service on both the Arizona Human Trafficking Task Force and Council as well as international efforts to combat trafficking, she has become a well-respected and persuasive voice on this vital issue, driving change both in Arizona and abroad.

America's leadership furthering human rights around the world means that we must hold ourselves to the highest standards when basic human rights are being undermined right here. I am grateful for the Senate's action. We must commit to continued efforts to restoring the freedom of those

caught in the horrors of modern slavery and eliminating this crime wherever it occurs.

Finally, here in the Senate we have gridlock on numerous issues. There are differences of opinion and philosophies. How in the world have we got differences on an issue such as this? Is the issue of right to life or abortion such an overwhelming issue that we can't address an issue which is the most egregious crime against innocent women and children?

This is really not an honorable time or a laudable time for the U.S. Senate. We should be taking up amendments and passing this legislation today. We are letting partisanship over an issue that has been discussed and debated—and will be many times in the future—prevent us from moving forward with this legislation. It is not honorable. It is not honorable for us to hold up this legislation because we have a difference on the issue of abortion.

I say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, let's not let this issue prevent us from doing the right thing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as the ranking member of the Budget Committee, I wish to take a few minutes to discuss the budget situation.

My understanding is that Senator ENZI, the chairman of the committee, intends to have a Budget Committee markup on Wednesday, March 18, and Thursday, March 19. My understanding is the resolution will come to the floor the following week of March 23. Unless I am mistaken, we will engage in what is called within the Beltway a vote-arama, where there will be a very significant number of amendments that will be allowed to be offered.

Before we discuss a budget, whether it is at the Federal level, the State level, or one's family, I think it is imperative to understand the conditions that exist as one prepares a budget. A budget reflects what our country is about. It reflects our national priorities. It reflects how we attempt to address the problems we face. It attempts to address how we go forward as a people into the future.

So the first issue at hand when we discuss a budget is to, in fact, determine what is going on in America today. What are our problems? What should we be doing and what should we not be doing?

I start off with the premise that I think is shared by the vast majority of the American people, which is that the middle class of this country over the last 40 years has been disappearing; that people today, by the millions, in Vermont and throughout this Nation, are working longer hours for low wages, despite a huge increase in productivity. That is the reality that faces most people in this country. But there is another reality, and that is that the people on top and the largest corporations are doing phenomenally well.

Today, real median family income is almost \$5,000 less than it was in 1999 in inflation accounted-for dollars. Why is that? How does that happen? The typical male worker—that man right in the middle of the American economy—made \$783 less last year than he did 42 years ago, after adjusting for inflation. How does that happen? We have an explosion of technology, a huge increase in productivity; we have the so-called great global economy, \$3 trillion all over the world; and the typical male worker—the guy in the middle of the economy—makes \$783 less last year than he did 42 years ago.

The typical female worker is making \$1,337 less than she did in 2007. Today, despite the modest gains of the Affordable Care Act—legislation I supported—40 million Americans continue to have no health insurance and we remain the only major country on Earth that does not guarantee health care to all people as a right.

Then we have today, because many people were driven from the middle class into poverty, more people today living in poverty than almost any time in the modern history of America. How does that happen?

Despite a very significant improvement in the economy since President Bush left office, real unemployment is not 5.5 percent, it is 11 percent. Youth unemployment, which we never talk about, is 17 percent, and African-American youth unemployment is much higher than that.

Throughout this country, a significant number of young people have given up on the dream of college. Here we are in a competitive global economy and we have bright young people from working-class families and they are looking at the cost of college and they are saying, Sorry, ain't for me. I am not going to come out of school \$50,000, \$60,000 in debt. What sense does that make when we are engaged in enormous economic competition with countries all over the world?

Then we have another group of young people graduating college or graduate school in debt to the tune of \$50,000, \$100,000. I talked to a young doctor in Burlington, VT, some months ago. She graduated medical school \$300,000 in debt for the crime of wanting to be a primary care physician. Does that make any sense?

While the middle class continues to disappear, the people on top and the largest corporations have never had it so good. That is the other reality of America today. The middle class shrinks—a whole lot of people living in poverty, people have no health insurance, kids can't afford to go to college—but people on top are doing phenomenally well.

Today, the top 1 percent earns more income than the bottom 50 percent. And since the Wall Street crash of 2008, over 99 percent of all new income goes to the top 1 percent. Over 99 percent of all new income goes to the top 1 percent.

Corporate profits are soaring. The stock market is up. CEOs now earn 270 times what their average employee makes. Today, the top one-tenth of 1 percent owns almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent. The top one-tenth of 1 percent owns almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent. And the wealthiest family in this country alone—one family—owns more wealth than the bottom 42 percent of the American family. Does that sound like the America we want to see, that we believe in, where so few have so much and so many have so little?

It is an extraordinary fact that between 1985 and 2013, the bottom 90 percent of our people lost \$10.7 trillion in wealth that it otherwise would have had if the distribution of wealth had remained at the same level as it was in 1985. If we had the same distribution of wealth, the bottom 90 percent would have had close to \$11 trillion more wealth. Meanwhile, the top one-tenth of 1 percent experienced an \$8 trillion increase in wealth as the distribution of wealth became increasingly unequal.

What a phenomenon, this huge transfer of wealth from working people to the millionaires and billionaires.

Now let me get to the budget, because when we deal with a budget, we can't ignore that reality. If the rich get much richer and the middle class declines, it makes no sense at all to say we are going to give more tax breaks to the rich and we are going to cut programs for the middle class and working families. This is the Robin Hood principle in reverse. It is taking from the middle class and working families and giving to the very rich.

I worry very much that this is exactly what will be in the Republican budget that we debate next week in committee. I expect—and I may be mistaken and I hope I am but I don't think I am—I expect the Republican budget in the Senate this year will be very close to what the so-called Ryan budget did last year which was passed by the Republican House. There may be nuances of differences, I don't know, but I think it will be very close.

Let me tell my colleagues what the Republican budget will be about. The Republican budget will oppose ending tax loopholes for the wealthy and large corporations—loopholes that allow billionaire hedge fund managers to pay a lower tax rate than electricians and schoolteachers. I expect that the Republican budget will continue to allow major profitable corporations such as General Electric, Verizon, and many others to go through a given year paying absolutely nothing in Federal income tax. I expect that the Republican budget will attempt to voucherize Medicare—and it as we know it to be—and I expect there will be massive cuts in Medicaid, education, nutrition programs, Pell grants, and the kinds of programs that working families absolutely depend upon.

We need a very different budget than what I believe the Republicans are

going to propose. We need a budget that stands for the working families of this country and not just the millionaires and billionaires.

Let me tell my colleagues what that budget should include, although I don't think the Republican budget will include these ideas. When real unemployment is 11 percent, we need a budget that creates millions of decent-paying jobs. In my view, and in the view of many economists, the fastest way to create those jobs and address a real national crisis is to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure—our roads, our bridges, water systems, wastewater plants, airports, dams, levees, and expand broadband to rural America. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, we need to invest over \$3 trillion to rebuild our infrastructure. We are not going to do that, but we need to make a major investment. When we do that, we make America more productive and safer, and we also create millions of jobs.

A serious budget needs to make our Tax Code fairer and to bring substantial new revenue into Federal coffers. We need a budget that ends unfair tax loopholes and asks the wealthiest people and largest corporations to pay their fair share of taxes.

Today at the hearing we had in the Committee on the Budget, a Republican witness testified that he thought that corporate taxes should be zero—zero. Well, that does not make a lot of sense to me.

We need a budget that understands when the Federal minimum wage is a starvation wage of \$7.25 an hour, we need to substantially raise the minimum wage. We need to deal with the overtime scandal we currently see. We need to raise wages for low- and moderate-income families.

At a time when large numbers of our young people have given up on the dream of higher education and college is increasingly unaffordable, we need a budget that says to every kid in America that if you have the ability and you have the desire, you are going to get a higher education regardless of the income of your family. At a time when corporations have shipped millions of decent-paying jobs to China and other low-wage countries, we need a budget that rewards companies for investing in America and for creating jobs here, not abroad.

At a time when millions of people still lack health insurance, we need a budget that ensures quality, affordable health care for all Americans by supporting the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, strengthening Medicare and Medicaid, and extending funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, community health centers, and the National Health Service Corporation.

Let me conclude by making this simple and obvious point: A budget is about priorities. A budget is about choices. And what we have to determine is whether our budget coming out

of the Senate is a budget that represents the needs of the rich and large corporations and their wealthy campaign donors, or whether we produce a budget which represents the needs of working families and the middle class and the millions and millions of families who are struggling economically to keep their heads above water.

I hope we make the right choice. I hope we stand with the working families of this country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise for the purpose of a unanimous consent request. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am on the floor to discuss the Human Trafficking Survivors Relief and Empowerment Act, which is legislation I introduced last week to aid the recovery of survivors of human trafficking.

This bill, which I have also filed as an amendment to Senator CORNYN's Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, will make important strides toward helping survivors of human trafficking free themselves from the social stigma that is associated with their victimization and help them rebuild their lives as productive members of society.

I wish to start by sharing the story of a young woman who was featured on NPR several weeks ago. She is a human trafficking survivor. Her story is far too common.

She was raped for the first time at age 11. At 13, she was lured away from her family and eventually forced into engaging in commercial sex. She talked about the physical trauma she endured at the hands of her captor—her skull was cracked, all of her ribs broken, and she endured regular beatings and black eyes.

For roughly 7 years, her entire teenage life—a life she should have been spending in school and among friends—she endured the worst kinds of physical and emotional torture. Finally, at age 20, she was rescued by a thoughtful police officer nearly 1,400 miles from her home.

Fortunately, this young woman is now in the process of rebuilding her life. She has moved home near her family, she has a young son, and she is hoping to go to school for nursing and to make a better life for herself and her family. However, she is constantly confronted by the reality of the criminal record she accumulated as the result of being a trafficking victim. Every application she fills out, every job interview she attends, she is forced to relive and explain the most painful moments of her life.

As this victim told NPR, "I'm not ever going to forget what I've done, but at the same time, I don't want it thrown in my face every time I'm trying to seek employment."

Human traffickers use force, fraud, and coercion to compel their victims to engage in criminal activity, particularly prostitution, yet it is often the trafficking victims who are arrested, detained, prosecuted, and convicted.

My legislation is simple. It provides an incentive for States to enact laws that allow human trafficking survivors to clear their State criminal records of prostitution and other low-level, non-violent crimes that result from being trafficked.

Specifically, these vacatur statutes allow trafficking survivors to file a motion in court to expunge their criminal record for crimes they can reasonably demonstrate were the result of being trafficked.

My colleague Senator GILLIBRAND has filed a similar amendment that would address this issue at the Federal level or in Federal court. Her amendment would ensure that victims charged with Federal crimes have the opportunity to clear their record of the most serious types of charges associated with trafficking.

My amendment would encourage States to provide a remedy for the most common types of charges that trafficking victims face.

I urge my colleagues to support my legislation and my amendment. I hope we can get trafficking legislation done in a way that will help the victims in the future.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 5 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4:01 p.m., recessed until 5 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LEE).

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of my remarks Senator ISAKSON be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, there are a lot of people—scientists, doctors and health professionals, our military and security leaders, the insurance and reinsurance industry, most of our major utilities, even faith leaders—who agree that climate change is a serious problem and an important priority.

In the private sector, many corporate leaders see climate change as both a moral challenge and a financial opportunity. Indeed, as I rise today for now the 92nd time to urge my colleagues in Congress to wake up to the urgent threat of climate change, major American companies have already begun to take action. They are not waiting around for Congress.

Ceres, for instance, is a nonprofit organization that helps to mobilize investors and business leaders to build a sustainable global economy. Ceres reports that nearly half of Fortune 500 companies now have their own clean energy targets.

Institutional investors are also committed to fighting climate change. In 2003, there were just 10 of them. Ten years later, by 2013, there were 110, holding \$13 trillion in assets. Walmart uses about 25 percent renewable energy, Google is at 35 percent, and Apple nearly 75 percent. More and more companies are seeing the benefit of cleaning up their energy sources and investing in the future, and it is not just out of the goodness of their hearts. These are our most profitable corporations. They have made a successful business model of saving money by reducing their carbon footprint.

Coca-Cola, for instance, knows how disruptive climate change can be to the water supply that is the most basic need of its bottling facilities. Apparel giant VF Corporation understands the threat of changing conditions to agricultural commodities such as cotton. And, yes, these companies also know that four out of five Americans support action on climate change. In other words, climate-friendly corporate practices are a hit with consumers, particularly younger consumers.

Since consumers want climate friendliness, there are also companies that try to have it both ways. They try to look like good actors on climate change without really being good actors. It is called green washing, and the major oil and gas companies are classic green washers. Look at their public statements and their ad campaigns, and we might think they were helping to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. But what they say and what they do, do not match up. Look at the green ad campaigns that have been run by the big oil companies. Some of these multimillion dollar campaigns still run today.

Here is Chevron saying, "We agree," it is time for oil companies to get behind renewable energy. This campaign started in 2010 and is still around. For years Chevron said renewable energy