

without it. Our Northeast corridor alone moves more than 700,000 people a day. Without the necessary PTC safeguards, these people will face the threat of a devastating crash more so every day. The sheer volume of commuters itself presents momentous concern for the State to be able to successfully guarantee the well-being of its rail lines. Knowing now that crashes like the Metro-North accident could have been prevented by PTC protections, I can say with bursting resolve that it is time for us to do better. The application of PTC directly translates into lives saved. To me and for many, that is an easy trade—as easy as it ever gets.

But it is rarely ever that simple. I recognize that for many in the rail industry, who share my commitment to improving safety, the reality is that difficult investment decisions need to be made and the current timeline is not achievable, even for those with the best of intentions. Implementation will take time. We cannot expect these complex technological improvements to come overnight. In spite of this, we can still hold these improvements to a reasonably tight schedule, one that is attainable.

I am hopeful that in the time between today's committee vote and before the final passage of PTC legislation, we can work to shorten the extension and find a better balance. I look forward to working with the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee chairman, ranking member, and the rest of my colleagues to improve this initiative.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD WILLIAMS

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Edward C. Williams, Jr. Ed honorably served the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for more than 15 years, most recently as State director for my Senate office. Ed has been a trusted advisor and friend over the 8 years we worked together.

A native of Wilkes-Barre, an alumnus of the Head Start program in Luzerne County, and a graduate of Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Ed has deep roots in Pennsylvania. Prior to joining my staff, he served in the House of Representatives for Congressman Paul Kanjorski as a staff assistant, later earning a leading advisory role on House budgetary proceedings. When he was recommended to my staff following my election to the Senate in 2006, we knew right away that we wanted Ed on our team. He was the first legislative staffer hired for my Washington, DC office, serving as our projects and appropriations director.

Ed immediately became one of my most valued and effective legislative aides. To further his education he attended law school at night while working full-time in Washington, DC and

passed the bar. He was promoted to senior counsel in my office shortly thereafter. In 2010, Ed accepted the position of State director for my Senate office. Overseeing seven district offices and serving as my primary liaison to many of the State's most prominent leaders, Ed has never failed to exceed expectations. Were it not for Ed, many of our most ambitious projects could never have been realized.

In my years of public service, I have had the privilege of working with many intelligent and hard-working professionals. Without question, Ed ranks among the top. He is one of the most capable and diligent people I have had the pleasure of working with, and his commitment to excellence is evident in all that he does.

On a personal note, getting to know Ed has been a privilege. A true champion for the people of our State, Ed should be extremely proud of the great work he has done for thousands of our constituents. I will forever be grateful to him for his public service.

My staff and I will miss Ed greatly, but we know that he will remain a close friend and trusted advisor. I wish him, his wife Lisa, and their son Matthan well in this exciting new chapter of their lives.●

TRIBUTE TO DAWN JUSTICE

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I honor Dawn Justice, who is retiring from serving as president and chief executive officer of the Idaho Bankers Association.

Dawn, who grew up in Sarasota, FL, began her career in the hotel industry working in hotel management for the Hilton and Hyatt hotels. Her work in this field took her to California, Texas, Singapore, and Thailand before we were blessed that she chose to make Idaho her home 24 years ago. Prior to her work with the Idaho Bankers Association, she also worked as vice president of human resources for the Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry and special projects assistant for Boise State University, where she also earned her master of public administration degree.

For the past 11 years, Dawn has led the Idaho Bankers Association with remarkable skill and knowhow. Throughout her time with the association, Dawn has been instrumental in advancing a number of the organization's priorities, including initiatives involving the Idaho Bank Act, Personal Information Security Act, the Credit Report Protection Act, the Residential Mortgages Practices Act, the Uniform Prudent Investor Act, and much more. She has utilized her indispensable talents advocating for policy objectives of importance both at the State and national levels.

Dawn's efforts and advocacy on behalf of the Idaho banking community have been exceptionally helpful as we have worked together over the years. She has been an outstanding advocate

in explaining the need for traditional banking and the costs of overregulation on consumers, small businesses and communities. She was instrumental in providing valuable insight and recommendations that helped me craft and advance my regulatory relief legislation into law. Additionally, her help pushing back against harmful Dodd-Frank rules and providing insight into how many of these rules would negatively impact credit and economic growth opportunities in Idaho has been especially appreciated.

Dawn, thank you for your hard work and effective leadership. You have been a great strength in advancing Federal policy changes of assistance to Idahoans. I commend you for your service to Idaho and our Nation. I wish you all the best and hope you have a retirement filled with many good times with your loved ones. Congratulations on your remarkable career and retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:30 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 216. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a Future-Years Veterans Program and a quadrennial veterans review, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Chief Strategy Officer, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1092. An act to designate the Federal building located at 2030 Southwest 145th Avenue in Miramar, Florida, as the "Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Building".

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

At 7:07 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled joint resolution:

S.J. Res. 8. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation case procedures.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 216. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a Future-Years Veterans Program and a quadrennial veterans review, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Chief Strategy Officer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

Special Report entitled "History, Jurisdiction, and a Summary of Activities of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources during the 113th Congress" (Rept. No. 114-6).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Patricia D. Cahill, of Missouri, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2020.

*Dava J. Newman, of Massachusetts, to be Deputy Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

*Willie E. May, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 857. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 858. A bill to amend the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to encourage the increased use of performance contracting in Federal facilities; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 859. A bill to protect the public, communities across America, and the environment by increasing the safety of crude oil transportation by railroad, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, Mr. COATS, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. HELLER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. LEE, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 860. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COTTON, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. THUNE, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 861. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to curb waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. REED, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. UDALL, Mr. REID, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CASEY, Mr. NELSON, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 862. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 863. A bill to reauthorize and improve the Appalachian regional development program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 864. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish direct care registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratio requirements in hospitals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 865. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the disability compensation evaluation procedure of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for veterans with mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 866. A bill to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of the families of New York Police Department Detectives Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 867. A bill to improve student academic achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 111. A resolution designating March 2015 as "National Middle Level Education Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. Res. 112. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Internal Revenue Service should provide printed copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 to taxpayers in the United States free of charge; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. Res. 113. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee should recommend the issuance of, and the United States Postal Service should issue, a commemorative stamp in honor of the holiday of Diwali; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. Res. 114. A resolution supporting the designation of March 2015, as "National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. Res. 115. A resolution designating April 2015 as "National Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Awareness Month"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 125

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 125, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2020, and for other purposes.

S. 207

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 207, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use existing authorities to furnish health care at non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities to veterans who live more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest medical facility of the Department that furnishes the care sought by the veteran, and for other purposes.

S. 303

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 303, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that individuals having seriously delinquent tax debts shall be ineligible for Federal employment.

S. 366

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island