

Recently, Mayor Marty Walsh announced the city of Boston will now recognize April 15 as One Boston Day. One Boston Day is a chance to honor the victims and survivors of the marathon bombing and an opportunity for people to give back to the community through acts of service. This day helps us remember that in the face of tragedy and violence, our community responds with an open heart.

Next Monday, tens of thousands of people from across the Nation and around the world, once again, will come to Massachusetts for the 2015 Boston Marathon. Our Commonwealth, once again, will commemorate Patriots' Day with reenactments, baseball, parades, and celebrations.

Today, as we mark One Boston Day and the second anniversary of the attack at the Boston Marathon, we recall the spirit of strength and resilience that brought our city and our Commonwealth together, the same spirit of strength and resilience that helps us heal.

As a tribute to honor the victims and survivors of the attack at the 2013 Boston Marathon, I ask my colleagues to join Bostonians in a moment of silence at 2:49 p.m. today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Massachusetts.

**Mr. MARKEY.** Mr. President, I would like to join Senator WARREN and the rest of the Senate in observing a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings.

The people of the United States will always remember the victims of the previous acts of terrorism that have occurred in the United States and will always stand together as one people. Two years ago today, three innocent people were killed and hundreds injured in two bombings that occurred during the running of the 117th Boston Marathon. On the happiest day in Boston, Patriots' Day, two bombs detonated by the two evil men took lives, limbs, and livelihoods away. That day, we lost Martin Richard, an 8-year-old boy from Dorchester; Krystle Campbell, from Arlington; and Lu Lingzi, who came to the United States from China; and 232 innocent people were also wounded in the bombings.

In the aftermath of the attacks, Officer Sean Collier, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology police force, was assassinated by the two twisted individuals who bombed our city. Officer Collier wasn't just protecting the best and the brightest minds, he was the best and brightest, an impressive and loved officer who has been greatly missed on campus and in our community.

I want to express my deepest thanks to all of the men and women in law enforcement in Massachusetts and around the Nation for their unwavering determination, courage, and resolve to bring to justice those responsible for the Boston Marathon bombings. We

were "Boston Strong" because we were Boston ready, with the best training and personnel available to save lives and to seek justice.

Many others responded decisively: the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, fire and rescue workers, caregivers, Armed Forces, and thousands more who, through their many expressions of care and compassion, brought forth comfort, hope, and the promise of recovery.

Today, under the leadership of Mayor Marty Walsh, the city of Boston is turning April 15 into a new tradition, honoring the resilience, generosity, and strength called One Boston Day. As Mayor Walsh said, "It's a day everyone should come together, spread goodwill throughout the city and recommit ourselves to our deepest values."

Mayor Walsh is right. This is a day for the citizens, businesses, and organizations in the city of Boston to display their humanity and draw neighbors together.

Thank you, Mayor Walsh, for helping all of us understand that the compassion and support we all felt that day should never be forgotten but instead should be a part of our lives every single day.

May the light of One Boston Day shine as an example of how our Nation responds to times of crisis.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** Under the previous order, the Senate will now observe a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings.

(Moment of silence.)

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

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

##### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

**Mr. SANDERS.** I send to the desk my motion to instruct conferees.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** Is there objection to setting aside the pending motion?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the provision in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate that provides for the establishment of a deficit-neutral reserve fund related to strengthening the United States Postal Service by establishing a moratorium to protect mail

processing plants, reinstating overnight delivery standards, protecting rural service, allowing the Postal Service to innovate and adapt to compete in a digital age, or improving the financial condition of the Postal Service.

**Mr. SANDERS.** Mr. President, I move to instruct conferees on S. Con. Res. 11, a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, to include in the conference report the provision in the concurrent resolution as passed by the Senate establishing a deficit-neutral reserve fund related to strengthening the U.S. Postal Service by establishing a moratorium to protect mail processing plants, reinstating overnight delivery standards, and protecting rural services.

During the so-called vote-arama, that amendment passed by voice vote. This time I hope we can get a strong rollcall vote on it because it is terribly important that we tell the Postmaster General of the United States that the U.S. Senate wants a strong and vibrant U.S. Postal Service.

What we are saying to the Postmaster General of the United States is pretty simple; that is, do not destroy up to 15,000 middle-class jobs, do not shut down up to 82 mail processing plants, stop slowing down mail service delivery in this country. Speed it up by reinstating strong overnight delivery standards for first-class mail.

I do not know about Arizona and I don't know about Wyoming, but I can tell you that in Vermont we have gotten a significant number of complaints from people who are upset by the slowdown of mail delivery standards. It is, to my mind, just unacceptable, and what we are saying now and will have to say in the months to come is you can't shut down another 82 processing plants, you cannot continue with these inadequate mail delivery standards, and it has to change. The American people and the business community are entitled to know that when they put a letter or document in the mail, it is going to get delivered in a prompt way. Today, that, sadly, is not the case.

For over 230 years and enshrined in our Constitution, the Postal Service has played an enormously important role for the people of our country and for our economy, and that mission today remains as important as it has ever been. The beauty of the Postal Service is that it provides universal service 6 days a week to every corner of our country, no matter how small or how remote. It will deliver mail on Wall Street and it will deliver mail to a home at the end of a back road in the State of Vermont.

The U.S. Postal Service supports, through its efforts, millions of jobs in virtually every sector of our economy. It provides decent-paying union jobs to some 500,000 Americans and, by the way, is the largest employer of veterans in this country.

Whether you are an elderly woman living on a dirt road in a rural area or you are a wealthy CEO executive on

Park Avenue, you get your mail delivered 6 days a week, and the American people pay for this service at a cost which is far less than any place else in the industrialized world. In other words, we get a pretty good bargain when we put a stamp on an envelope.

Unfortunately, despite the success and popularity of the Postal Service, it is under constant attack and has been under constant attack for years, including from those who would like to privatize the Postal Service and ultimately destroy it. Let's be clear. The same people who are attacking the Postal Service are often the same people who are attacking Social Security, Medicare, and so forth, and they essentially want to move to the privatization of virtually every major public institution in this country.

Today, the U.S. Postal Service is in the process of shutting down up to 82 mail processing plants and eliminating up to 15,000 decent-paying jobs. This is in addition to the 141 mail processing facilities that were closed between 2012 and 2013. In January, the Postal Service ended overnight delivery for first-class mail. It didn't get a whole lot of attention, but it happened.

The purpose of this motion is to put the Senate on record in strong opposition to these plant closings and to demand that the Postal Service reinstate strong overnight delivery standards and not destroy good-paying jobs.

We have been told that all of these horrendous cuts are necessary because the Postal Service is experiencing terrible financial problems. They are losing money every single year. Well, the truth is somewhat different. The major reason the Postal Service is in tough financial shape today is not because of email or the Internet, the major reason the Postal Service is hurting financially is because of a mandate signed into law by President Bush in December of 2006, during a lameduck session of Congress that forces the Postal Service to prefund 75 years of future retiree health benefits over a 10-year period. No other government agency or business in America is burdened with a mandate anywhere close to what the Postal Service has to expend, which is \$5.5 billion a year. So the main point is that when you see articles telling you the Postal Service is having financial problems, the main reason—the overwhelming reason—is this necessity to prefund 75 years of future retiring health benefits over a 10-year period at about \$5.5 billion a year. In fact, all—A-L-L—all of the so-called financial losses posted by the Postal Service since October 2012 are due to this prefunding mandate. That is it. Without that mandate, they would be making a modest amount of money.

We don't hear much about it, but I think it is very important for the American people to understand the reality of the finances in the Postal Service. Excluding the prefunding mandate, the Postal Service has actually made a \$1.8 billion profit. So it is a modestly

profitable operation excluding the \$5.5 billion prefunding mandate.

Revenue at the Postal Service has been increasing in recent years. At a time when Postal Service revenue is going up, it makes no sense to eliminate thousands of jobs and slow down the mail service that millions of Americans rely on.

We should be working to strengthen the Postal Service and not to send it into a death spiral. Before this prefunding mandate was signed into law, the Postal Service was also profitable. In fact, from 2003 to 2006, the Postal Service made a combined profit of more than \$5 billion.

I think there is broad bipartisan support, especially from Senators who come from rural areas and who understand just how important the Postal Service is to the people of our States.

Once again, when offered as an amendment at the vote-arama, this passed by voice vote. We are going to ask for a rollcall vote when the voting takes place. I hope we win this vote with a very strong vote and send a message to the Postal Service that we want our Postal Service to provide the quality mail service the American people deserve.

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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, that passed by a voice vote, which is considered unanimous around here. You cannot get more unanimous than that. I am hoping that out of the 10 to 13 votes we are going to have this afternoon, that some can be done on voice votes. I do not think there is anybody who disagrees with what the Senator has said about closing the postal plants and the extra time it is taking for deliveries. You can add to that how little money it saves because the employees who are in one town, even though their job got moved somewhere else, still have to be retained in that town at some job. It does not amount to much in the way of savings, but it really hurts in the way of efficiency, delivery, and trust in the post office.

So I think we will all be behind you on that one again. I hope that by the time we get to that, it will be a voice vote again.

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up Senator BURR's motion, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. ENZI], for Mr. BURR, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to addressing student loan debt, which may include reducing overlapping student loan repayment programs and creating a simplified income-driven student loan repayment option, as included in section 358 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. ENZI. I would mention that this is a side-by-side to Senator WARREN's amendment. I am hoping that at the time we vote, we can do 1 minute on each side so they have a chance for their explanation.

I now yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Arizona.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

#### TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the need for the Senate to pass trade promotion authority legislation. It is no secret that trade matters in the ability of the United States and our businesses here to sell goods to foreign markets and to buy what we need from abroad to keep our businesses humming along right here at home and to keep Americans employed. This is paramount to our Nation's prosperity. You do not need to be an economist to see it. Anyone who owns an iPhone, drives a foreign car, or shops at Costco—everyone understands even in a small way that trade is beneficial to American companies and to customers alike. Likewise, American farmers and manufacturers and service providers want and need to sell their corn, cotton, beef, tractors, furniture, airplanes, their businesses and financial services to customers around the world who want and need them. Sadly, not all countries see it that way, and they throw up barriers to American goods and services. They do not want them entering their countries. That is why passing trade promotion authority is so important.

Increasing free trade levels the playing field for U.S. companies. It increases competition. It increases access to foreign markets.

According to the Office of U.S. Trade Representative, the United States is the world's largest economy, the largest importer, and the largest exporter of goods and services. In 2014, figures from the International Trade Administration show that the United States exported a record \$2.35 trillion in goods and services.

For those of us who represent border States, this issue hits close to home. In recent years, Mexico has been America's third largest trading partner and our second largest export market. According to the Arizona-Mexico Commission, Arizona ports of entry are gateways to \$41.6 billion in U.S.-Mexican trade annually, of which nearly \$16 billion is attributed to Arizona's own trade with Mexico.

Simply put, without trade promotion authority, the United States would be forced to stand on the sidelines as other countries move forward with their own trade agreements. Without renewing fast-track authority, there is little chance of a successful resolution of the ongoing negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP. This agreement will allow American companies to do business more freely with some of the world's fastest growing economies.

As the Washington Post editorial put it this week, "To this boon to the U.S. and world economies, add the fact that TPP would ensure that the Pacific Rim plays by U.S.-style rules and regulations rather than China's neo-mercantilist rules, and you have a compelling case for swift approval." I agree. But unless we pass trade promotion authority legislation, it will be difficult for the United States to become part of this vital partnership.

I am proud to continue to voice my support for free trade. I look forward to the Senate giving trade promotion authority careful consideration in the coming weeks.

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.

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

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

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MIKULSKI] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to amending the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to allow for punitive damages, limit the any factor "other than sex" exception, and prohibit retaliation against employees who share salary information, as included in amendment 362 to S. Con. Res. 11 (as not agreed to by the Senate).

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to offer a motion to instruct the conferees based on a bill that I have offered for the last three Congresses; that is, the Paycheck Fairness Act.

What does the Paycheck Fairness Act do? It finishes the job that we started with Lilly Ledbetter. It would, in fact, instruct the conferees to make three reforms:

No. 1, to advance the cause of making sure that women get equal pay for equal work. It would stop retaliation for sharing pay information. Often workers are harassed and humiliated just for asking about coworkers' salaries.

No. 2, it would stop employers from using any reason to pay women less: Oh, the guys do harder jobs. Women aren't breadwinners. OK, it is time for equal pay for equal work.

It would also allow for punitive damages for women who are being discriminated against when the only deterrent against pay discrimination is the

threat of paying women backpay. Discrimination can be factored into the cost of doing business.

Yesterday was Equal Pay Day, something we, unfortunately, commemorate each year. It symbolizes that it takes 104 days longer in a year for a woman to earn what a man earned the previous year.

What does that mean? It means that for what a man earns in 365 days, it takes a woman 469 days to earn the same amount of money—104 days more.

We don't commemorate this day with joy but with a call to action. We need to make a change in the Federal lawbooks to finally get equal pay in the Federal checkbooks.

Now, we want this in the budget act because we know this will be an important way of dealing with a variety of issues. We worked on this legislation for a number of years and, quite frankly, we are frustrated. We are frustrated that time and again we are trying to advance this cause.

It started over 50 years ago. In 1963, Lyndon Johnson, moving on the civil rights legislation, thought that equal pay for women would be an easy thing to pass. At that time, only 11 percent of mothers were in the workforce. Now, there are over 70 percent of mothers in the workforce.

At that time, women were, again, paid 59 cents for every \$1 a man earned. Well, we passed the Civil Rights Act. Now, 50 years later, we are up to 78 cents for every \$1 a man earns. So it has taken us 50 years to advance 20 cents.

Well, that just doesn't work. The women in America feel sidelined, redlined, and pink-slipped for the way they are discriminated against, and then they face the harassment and intimidation when they simply ask questions to get the pay they deserve.

What we now know, again, is that the facts speak for themselves. Women earn 78 cents for every \$1 a man makes. For women close to the retirement age, the wage gap increases to almost \$14,000 a year. By the time she retires, the average woman has lost almost \$400,000 in a lifetime of wages.

The impact is you get less in Social Security benefits, you have less in savings, and you face the grim possibility of poverty. What we also know is that this has a tremendous impact in terms of single mothers.

Over the weekend, there was a terrific article in the Washington Post saying if you wanted to eliminate poverty among children, you could take a major step in doing so if you closed the pay parity gap. In effect, by paying single women and single mothers equal pay for equal work, you could reduce the poverty rate among children by over 20 percent.

What a startling fact. Well, the fact is that we have been fighting for this for a long time.

I urge the adoption of this amendment. I think it makes important fiscal policy, and it is important for the

family's checkbook and for our checkbook.

I wish to close with these remarks. I think it was the day before, in the New York Times. They were talking about how we are essentially subsidizing those people who are paid the minimum wage.

Now, my background is that I was a social worker. The Presiding Officer is familiar with that. But when you look at the four major components of government subsidies to the poor—Medicaid, TANF, the child care development subsidy, and there is one other thing that I just don't recall at this minute—for actually people who are working—oh, food stamps. Working every single day, they are eligible for government subsidies because they are not paid enough for what they do.

What we often find is that not only is the minimum wage a terrible place to begin, but as you move up the work ladder, often women are in jobs where they are paid less than the men who work beside them. As a result—and it often is the case—we end, then, by dealing with that by our paying for it in Medicaid, in food stamps, and earned income tax credit.

Now, I support those programs. I think when people are poor they need our help, but our goal is to make sure that if you were poor and you want to have a way to get ahead, we should help you.

If you want to be middle class, we should help you get there. One of the ways to do that is to make sure we pay equal pay for equal work.

I hope that my amendment is adopted. I could debate this in more ways, but year after year we come to the floor and we show the disparity between what women make from men for the same job.

This isn't just a woman's issue. Many men here support this. I can tell you who supports it: fathers. Fathers, fathers, fathers. Why do they support it? They work hard to make sure that in many instances their daughters get a break, try to get an education, try to get ahead only to find that although they shouldered the same responsibilities for car payments, paying off student loans, and all of that, they, in fact, are not paid equal pay for equal work. We can change that by voting for the Mikulski amendment in this budget bill.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BENNET. 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. BENNET. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Colorado [Mr. BENNET] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed—

(1) to insist that the final conference report include provisions in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate for the establishment of deficit-neutral reserve funds relating to—

(A) responding to the causes and impacts of climate change, including the economic and national security threats posed by human-induced climate change; and

(B) Department of Defense initiatives to bolster resilience of mission critical department infrastructure to impacts from climate change; and

(2) to recede from the position of the Senate regarding provisions in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate for the establishment of deficit-neutral reserve funds that undermine the response to climate change, including prohibitions on the regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency of greenhouse gas emissions.

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

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

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk a motion to instruct conferees. I am offering this motion on behalf of Senator MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to setting aside the pending motion?

Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for Mrs. MURRAY, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this is a motion to instruct budget conferees to keep in the bill the Senate-passed deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time. This was an amendment which passed during a vote-arama of the Senate by a vote of 61 to 39. So it passed with pretty strong bipartisan support, and I would hope we could pass this language again.

The truth is, at a time when millions of Americans are working longer hours for lower wages, when our middle class

continues to decline, we also have another serious problem in that only 53 percent of workers report having paid sick leave. Well, you know, people get sick. That is a fact of life, and it is unfortunate that only 53 percent of workers report having paid sick leave. This means people are going to work when they are not well. I don't know about you, but I am not enthused about walking into a restaurant where someone who may have the flu or have some other problem is serving food or preparing food. I don't think that is terribly healthy for this country, not to mention that when there are so many contagious illnesses out there, I don't know that we want to have people who are ill and contagious going to work.

So this is a very simple motion and basically reiterates what we had in the first discussion. Again, it won by 61 to 39.

All over this country, States and cities are in the process of enacting paid sick leave legislation, and they are seeing economic benefits from that. They have seen mothers more likely to return to work and higher employment in the leisure, hospitality, education, and health sectors.

So, again, this is the same language Senator MURRAY offered. I strongly support this motion, and I hope my colleagues will vote for it.

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

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

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk a motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for Mrs. MURRAY, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision to build on the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and provide sequester relief in 2016 and 2017 by closing tax loopholes.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this motion is being offered on behalf of Senator MURRAY, and it would instruct budget conferees to build on the Bipartisan Budget Act and provide sequester relief in 2016 and 2017 by closing tax loopholes.

As the ranking member of the Committee on the Budget, I rise today to offer a motion to instruct conferees, on behalf of Senator MURRAY, to S. Con. Res. 11, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, to pro-

vide 2 years of sequester relief by closing tax loopholes. This is a concept, an idea I very strongly support. Many Members on both sides of the aisle are concerned that Congress will not be able to pass and enact appropriations bills at the sequester levels. The President's fiscal year 2016 budget provides sequester relief. Moreover, the President has indicated he will veto legislation that does not lift the sequester caps.

Discretionary spending has already been cut by \$1.6 trillion, and non-defense discretionary spending is currently on track to be the lowest in 50 years. Nondefense discretionary spending is on track to be the lowest in 50 years.

Instead of continuing to cut non-defense discretionary spending, we need to increase funding for programs, such as education and infrastructure, that reduce income inequality and that create the millions of jobs we so desperately need. We can fund these investments by looking at wasteful spending in the Tax Code that has allowed major corporations to pay very little, if anything, in Federal income taxes.

Each and every year, we are losing well over \$100 billion in revenue because large, profitable corporations and some of the wealthiest Americans in this country are stashing their profits in the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, and other offshore tax havens.

Further, the GAO has reported that the effective tax rate of large, profitable corporations is just 12.6 percent—much lower than the 35-percent statutory rate because of these tax loopholes. That is much lower than what millions of middle-class workers pay to the IRS because of the loopholes written into the Tax Code by corporate lobbyists.

In 1952, 32 percent of all of the revenue generated in this country came from large corporations. Today, that figure is down to just 11 percent. Right now, there are so many loopholes in our Tax Code that it ends up that many large corporations making billions of dollars in profit pay nothing—zero—in corporate taxes to the Federal Government.

As a few examples, General Electric made over \$5.8 billion in profits in the United States last year but paid just nine-tenths of 1 percent of that amount in Federal income taxes. Time Warner made \$4.3 billion in profits and paid nothing in Federal income taxes; in fact, it got a rebate of \$26 million. Xerox made \$628 million in profits in 2014 and paid nothing in Federal income taxes; in fact, it received a tax rebate of \$16 million.

I strongly support this motion which has been introduced by Senator MURRAY to provide sequester relief, particularly for nondefense discretionary programs, and I would hope very much that this motion to instruct will receive wide bipartisan support.

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.

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

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

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Ms. STABENOW] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate, which would substantially increase out-of-pocket healthcare expenses for senior citizens, and not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the House of Representatives, which would end Medicare as it currently exists by turning it into a voucher-based premium support system and eliminate the guaranteed healthcare benefits earned by the people of the United States.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, my motion would instruct conferees to remove from the budget resolution any Medicare cuts that would increase out-of-pocket costs for senior citizens, eliminate guaranteed benefits, or make structural changes to Medicare by turning it into a voucher-based premium support system.

It is incredibly important that something as important as health care for senior citizens and those with disabilities be protected and honored. People are paying into this system. They have paid into this system their whole lives. They have the confidence of knowing that health care is available to them, those now on Medicare, and we need to make sure we are strengthening this health care system, not fundamentally changing it from a guaranteed system to some kind of a voucher system or making other kinds of changes that will cost people more money.

When we began this process, my hope was that we could have a spending plan that really would address the middle class and a budget resolution that would make it very clear that this is about giving every American a fair shot—a fair shot to stay in the middle class or to work hard and get into the middle class—that this is really about strengthening our country. We don't have an economy without a middle class. It is not the other way around. We don't have an economy without a middle class. That is the economic engine.

I was hoping for a budget that would reflect one of our core beliefs—that if

you work hard in America, you are going to have a fair shot to be able to get ahead. But that is not what this budget is about. Unfortunately, this budget does not do that. Instead, Republicans have written a budget that continues to rig the system for the wealthy and the well-connected rather than creating opportunity for everybody to make it.

That is really the fundamental fight we have had through this whole budget process. How do we grow the economy? Is it the top down? Do we give to those one more time at the very top and hope that it trickles down and that somehow people who are working hard every day will actually feel it and have money in their pockets, or do we focus on the middle? Do we focus on those working hard to get into the middle class and create an opportunity to grow from the bottom up, which is the way we know the economies grow?

So I am deeply concerned about the cuts to Medicare in this budget. I am also deeply concerned about the other cuts to health care in this budget. We all wish we could control whether we get sick or whether our children get sick, but the reality is that health care is an issue for all of us. It is not a frill; it is a necessity. Medicare has addressed that for seniors and people with disabilities in a way that gives them peace of mind and confidence in a quality medical system.

We just addressed through a bill last night the whole question of making sure that doctors are paid and that they are available to people who are on Medicare. We have another part of the health care system called Medicaid, which is a lifeline to so many Americans who continue to feel the effects of the great recession and are struggling for basic health care needs. In fact, 80 percent of the Medicaid Program spending—80 percent of the dollars—goes to seniors in nursing homes and in some way impacts all of us—friends, neighbors, relatives.

So we are looking at a budget on the Medicaid front—when we combine it all, eliminating the Medicaid expansion and having the other cuts in the budget—of a \$1.2 trillion cut in the Senate budget. The Senate Republican budget cuts Medicaid health care—80 percent of which goes to seniors in nursing homes—by \$1.2 trillion. It is even worse in the House. I worry when we are now looking at going to conference with the House of Representatives, where their combined cut was \$1.7 trillion to Medicaid, of which most of the money goes to low-income seniors in nursing homes. They would then also turn it into a block grant and cut it on top of that, and we don't even know if it would get spent on health care.

Unfortunately, this budget, while not really balancing, is attempting to be balanced on the backs of the most vulnerable Americans in our country, and our seniors are taking a huge hit in

this budget. The House cuts all together \$316 billion and moves away from the guaranteed benefit to something that has been called vouchers or premium support or other structures that don't look like Medicare.

In the Senate, all together now, when you add it up and the effects of what was done last night, we are looking at a cut of \$566 billion.

My amendment would stop that \$566 billion cut in Medicare or at least it would instruct—I should clarify that. I wish it would just automatically stop it, but it would instruct the final conference committee to not move forward on that \$566 billion in Medicare cuts. We are talking about Americans who have worked hard all their lives, and they have earned that health care benefit.

Let me also say that when we think about a budget that would reflect opportunity for everyone to get ahead or one that keeps a system rigged against the average American, we saw vote after vote where, unfortunately, colleagues on the other side of the aisle let opportunities slip away to provide real equal pay for women, equal pay for equal work. Yesterday was the day in which women finally made as much money in 2014 as a man made in 2014. It took the majority of women in this country until yesterday to make the same amount of money. We have an opportunity to fix that. The Republican colleagues said no. We had an opportunity to invest in rebuilding America—roads, bridges, water, sewer systems, crumbling infrastructure. Our distinguished ranking member is a champion on the issue of infrastructure. We had an opportunity to create millions of jobs and Republican colleagues said no. We had an opportunity to invest in education but instead we saw—and we see—a bill that takes away funding for Pell grants that doesn't help millions of Americans who are struggling to pay back college loans.

I just left a group of high school students from Brighton, MI, and the question I received was, What are you doing about the cost of college—and I am worried about the cost of college. I want to do the right thing. I want to go to school. They want to do what we are all asking them to do to get skills so they can compete in a global economy, be responsible adults.

Too many will come out of that college experience with more than enough debt to buy a big house, and then they will not be able to buy the house as they dig themselves out of debt.

We all know that in this bill, the Republican budget, both in the House and Senate, repeals the Affordable Care Act—between 16 million American people, health care gone, on top of all of the cuts to Medicare for senior citizens, senior citizens in nursing homes under Medicaid.

When we had an opportunity to close tax loopholes, I offered again my Bring Jobs Home Act to say a company

should not be able to move on paper out of this country and avoid paying their fair share to contribute to the services of America. They still breathe the air. They still drink the water. They still drive on the roads. They still get the educated workforce. But they move on paper, and now they are not a part of those contributing to America. I don't think that is very patriotic, frankly. We had a chance to close that and instead support the middle class, people working hard, increase their earned-income tax credit, and Republican colleagues said no.

So, unfortunately, we have in front of us a budget that says no to opportunity to the majority of Americans and yes to continued policies that, frankly, have not worked because they are focused on the privileged few.

If I might take just 1 more minute, I want to put my hat on as ranking member, former chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and say also that as a Member of the Budget Committee and the Agriculture Committee, I strongly urge the leadership in the Senate not to accept the reconciliation instruction related to agriculture and to, therefore, open the farm bill, all of the phases of the farm bill that we worked so hard to get passed in a bipartisan basis.

I commend the chairman for not including that reconciliation instruction in the Senate. I very much appreciate that, but the House does. We have Members on both sides of the aisle deeply concerned about reopening what is economic certainty. We have a lot of places that there is not certainty. But in rural America at least we have 5 years of economic certainty through the farm bill, and we have nearly 400 agricultural organizations led by the American Farm Bureau, food groups, conservation groups, nutrition groups that have asked us not to open the farm bill again in this process. I am very hopeful the Senate's position on that will be the position that is maintained.

I offer an amendment that we will be voting on Medicare. I think it will be wonderful if we came together and said no to the cuts in Medicare and that we would show that we understand what is at stake for that program. Also, I hope we will very clearly indicate that we want to stand with rural America and our farmers and make sure they do not have to worry about opening the policies of the farm bill until the 5 years on the farm bill has been completed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. I yield such time as the Senator from Nebraska needs to offer two motions. Those will be the last two offered, after which I think both sides are prepared to yield back their time and begin voting on the 13 different votes which we will be asking consent on when she finishes her speech.

I yield time to the Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion, which is at the desk.

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

Which motion does the Senator wish to call up first?

Mrs. FISCHER. Equal pay.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mrs. FISCHER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to promoting equal pay, which may include preventing discrimination on the basis of sex and preventing retaliation against employees for seeking or discussing wage information, as included in section 356 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mrs. FISCHER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to tax credits for employers providing paid family and medical leave.

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

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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back except for 5 minutes equally divided between the managers and that the Senate vote on the pending motions to instruct in the order listed, with 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form between each vote, and that all votes after the first in the series be limited to 10 minutes: No. 1 would be Brown on Wall Street banks; No. 2 would be Sanders, postal plant closures; No. 3 would be Burr, student loans; No. 4 would be Warren, student loans; No. 5 would be Sanders, Social Security; No. 6 would be Schatz, same-sex marriage benefits; No. 7 would be Bennet, climate change; No. 8 would be Fischer, side-by-side to Mikulski; No. 9, Mikulski, equal pay for equal work; No. 10, Fischer, side-by-side to Murray;

No. 11, Murray, paid sick leave; No. 12, Murray, eliminate sequestration; and No. 13, Stabenow, Medicare cuts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as I have indicated on many occasions, I think this Republican budget is, frankly, a disaster. It causes severe harm for some of the most vulnerable people in this country. It throws 27 million people off of health insurance. It forces elderly people to pay more for prescription drugs. It cuts \$90 billion in mandatory Pell grants at a time when young people are struggling to be able to afford to go to college. Pell grants are one of the significant ways that they are able to go to college; \$90 billion is cut. It cuts Head Start significantly, such that 110,000 fewer young children will be able to enroll in Head Start. It cuts title I education program money directed to schools with low-income kids, the schools who need help the most.

At a time when so many of our families are struggling to put food on the table, this budget cuts nutrition programs, including the WIC Program, by \$10 billion. That is the nutrition program that goes to pregnant women, mothers, and infants. It makes other massive cuts in nutrition. It makes cuts in affordable housing. It makes cuts in job training.

Now, in the midst of all of this, what it does also, unbelievably, while wreaking havoc on the lives of millions of working families, it decides that we can afford to give huge tax breaks to the very, very, very wealthiest—the top two-tenths of 1 percent—by abolishing the estate tax which would provide \$263 billion in tax breaks for the wealthiest two-tenths of 1 percent of the American people. But then, after giving huge tax breaks to the very, very, very rich, what it does is raise taxes for low-income and working-class families by increasing taxes by \$900 apiece for more than 13 million families by allowing the expansion of the earned-income tax credit and the child tax credit to expire.

So massive cuts in health care, education, and nutrition for working families; huge tax breaks—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for one more minute.

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

Mr. SANDERS. As I was saying, huge tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires and then increased taxes for low-income and working people. This is moving the country in exactly the wrong direction.

Today, our side of the aisle brought forth 10 separate motions to instruct, which, if passed, would make this budget a much better document, and I hope very much that both sides of the aisle will support these motions.



With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member for his cooperation to date and look forward to working with him on the conference committee, along with the Members of the House, both the Republicans and the Democrats. The purpose of that is to make this is a better budget bill.

I will reiterate that I had about 4 weeks to put it together and 4 months to get it done. We have not done one in 8 years, so it was quite a challenge. We are getting closer now, and today we will have an opportunity to voice some concerns. I am glad we are at this point. I look forward to working with the conferees.

I yield back any time.

BROWN MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Ohio related to Wall Street banks.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this motion is being offered by Senator BROWN of Ohio. Our big banks are too big. The largest banks are now 38 percent larger than they were before the crisis. In terms of outstanding loans, one out of seven Americans is being pursued by a debt collector. U.S. banks are so big that the six largest financial institutions in this country today have assets of roughly \$9.8 trillion, which is equivalent to 60 percent of the Nation's GDP.

Being big and powerful is good for the banks and bad for this country. For example, Bloomberg says the too-big-to-fail subsidy is massive. By being big, they get huge subsidies. It amounts to \$83 billion a year, and that is why I support this provision to stop too big to fail.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, this bill is cosponsored by Senator VITTER from our side. If a big bank fails under the Senator's reform, there is nothing that protects the taxpayers from having to save the bank. In other words, this approach does not do what many experts believe is needed, which is to expand the bankruptcy laws to permit an orderly disposition to failed banks without taxpayer bailouts.

I will note that the specific policies listed are all authorities that exist today in various financial regulatory agencies, and I believe all Senators support the goal of eliminating the risk of taxpayer bailouts.

Having said that, I ask that all the Republicans support this motion and offer to take it on a voice vote.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 146 Leg.]

YEAS—86

Ayotte	Gardner	Murphy
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Barrasso	Graham	Nelson
Bennet	Grassley	Paul
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Perdue
Blunt	Heitkamp	Peters
Booker	Heller	Portman
Boozman	Hirono	Reed
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Rounds
Cantwell	Isakson	Rubio
Capito	Johnson	Sanders
Cardin	Kaine	Schatz
Carper	King	Schumer
Casey	Kirk	Scott
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Sessions
Cochran	Lankford	Shaheen
Collins	Leahy	Shelby
Coons	Lee	Stabenow
Corker	Manchin	Sullivan
Cornyn	Markey	Tester
Daines	McCain	Thune
Donnelly	McCaskill	Udall
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Warren
Ernst	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Wyden
Franken	Murkowski	

NAYS—11

Alexander	Crapo	Sasse
Burr	Flake	Tillis
Coats	Hatch	Toomey
Cotton	Risch	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Reid	Vitter
------	------	--------

The motion was agreed to.

SANDERS MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion to instruct offered by the Senator from Vermont relative to postal plant closures.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, in the State of Vermont and I expect all over this country, especially in rural areas, what we have seen is a significant slowdown in mail delivery by the U.S. Postal Service. What this provision is about is the establishment of a deficit-neutral reserve fund which establishes a moratorium to prevent the shutting down of up to 82 mail processing plants all across this country. It is asking that we reinstate overnight delivery standards, undo what the Postal Service has done, that we protect rural services, and that we allow the Postal Service to innovate and adapt to compete in a digital age.

The basic financial problems of the Postal Service are that they have to pay \$5.5 billion every year in retirement benefits. That program already has \$50 billion in its account. Do away

with that, and the Postal Service will make a modest profit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, there is a huge concern, particularly in rural America, about the closing down of the processing centers in States. Our State no longer has a processing center. It takes at least an extra day to get the mail.

So I would urge my colleagues to accept this motion, and I would ask if the sponsor would take it by voice vote.

Mr. SANDERS. I have to call for a rollcall vote on this one.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 147 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Alexander	Franken	Murphy
Ayotte	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Portman
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Blunt	Heinrich	Risch
Booker	Heitkamp	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Sanders
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schatz
Capito	Isakson	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott
Carper	Kaine	Sessions
Casey	King	Shaheen
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wicker
Ernst	Mikulski	Wyden
Feinstein	Moran	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NAYS—11

Cassidy	Kirk	Rubio
Coats	Lee	Tillis
Corker	Paul	Toomey
Flake	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—4

Boxer	Reid
Cruz	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

BURR MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the

motion to instruct by the Senator from North Carolina relative to student loans.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise to offer a motion to instruct conferees that would insist that the final conference report on the budget include a provision to address student loans. This very simple motion to instruct tracks the amendment introduced by me and Senators KING, WARNER, and ALEXANDER that was included in the budget resolution by a voice vote.

The Senate has already demonstrated its support by unanimously passing this under a voice vote.

I yield to my cosponsor, Senator KING.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise to support this amendment. This simply simplifies the repayment options for students under the present student loan program, which is, frankly, very confusing—up to nine different programs with confusing names and confusing terms. This boils it down to two simple ones: a fixed repayment schedule or a variable schedule based upon income. I should mention that I see this as an important stand-alone provision.

I am also going to support Senator WARREN's amendment on refinancing student loans.

I believe this is an important amendment. I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 148 Leg.]

#### YEAS—97

Alexander	Brown	Cochran
Ayotte	Burr	Collins
Baldwin	Cantwell	Coons
Barrasso	Capito	Corker
Bennet	Cardin	Cornyn
Blumenthal	Carper	Cotton
Blunt	Casey	Crapo
Booker	Cassidy	Daines
Boozman	Coats	Donnelly

Durbin	Lankford	Rounds
Enzi	Leahy	Rubio
Ernst	Lee	Sanders
Feinstein	Manchin	Sasse
Fischer	Markley	Schatz
Flake	McCain	Schumer
Franken	McCaskill	Scott
Gardner	McConnell	Sessions
Gillibrand	Menendez	Shaheen
Graham	Merkley	Shelby
Grassley	Mikulski	Stabenow
Hatch	Moran	Sullivan
Heinrich	Murkowski	Tester
Heitkamp	Murphy	Thune
Heller	Murray	Tillis
Hirono	Nelson	Toomey
Hoeven	Paul	Udall
Inhofe	Perdue	Warner
Isakson	Peters	Warren
Johnson	Portman	Whitehouse
Kaine	Reed	Wicker
King	Reid	Wyden
Kirk	Risch	
Klobuchar	Roberts	

#### NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
-------	------	--------

The motion was agreed to.

#### WARREN MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Massachusetts relative to student loans.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I support simplifying student loans—the motion that just passed 97 to 0—and I commend Senators KING and BURR, but it is not enough. We need to cut the interest rate on student loans. The Federal Government should not be making a profit off the backs of our kids who are trying to get an education.

This bill is paid for by asking millionaires and billionaires to pay taxes at the same rate as middle-class families.

This is a bill which really puts it to the Senate. Are we here to work just for the millionaires and billionaires or are we here to work for young people who are trying to get an education? This Senate works all the time for billionaires. Today, I hope we can make it work for our students.

I urge adoption of this motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to vote against the Warren motion. What the Senator wants to do is to create yet another repayment program, which ultimately ends up costing students more than the income-based repayment. She puts hundreds of billions of private debt on the Federal books and pretends the cost is free. Rather than fixing the maze of repayment programs, she adds to it with a new program that is ultimately less generous than the existing program. Whereas the Federal Government income-based repayment program and other related loan repayment programs will cap payments as a percentage of an individual's income, Senator WARREN's legislation would only lower the interest rate on those payments, potentially steering students into higher monthly payments than they face in those other programs. So I urge my colleagues to oppose the Warren motion.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Ms. WARREN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 149 Leg.]

#### YEAS—45

Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Peters
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Reid
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Leahy	Schumer
Carper	Manchin	Shaheen
Casey	Markley	Stabenow
Coons	McCaskill	Tester
Donnelly	Menendez	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warren
Franken	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden

#### NAYS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Ayotte	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Isakson	Sessions
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Corker	Kirk	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	
Ernst	Murkowski	

#### NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
-------	------	--------

The motion was rejected.

#### SANDERS MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Vermont relative to Social Security.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, Social Security is arguably the most important Federal program we have. It is life and death to millions of senior citizens, people who have to figure out how they pay for food, how they heat their homes, how they pay for their medicine. Social Security is not going broke. It could pay out all benefits for the next 18 years.

What this provision does is make it clear that we go on record to not cut Social Security benefits, not raise the



retirement age, not privatize Social Security. Let's stand with the seniors of this country. Let us protect Social Security, not cut it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, under the budget rules we can't do anything to Social Security. So this doesn't provide permission or denial of anything that we can do at the present time. We cannot touch Social Security under the budget.

So I ask for the Senator to take a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 84, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 150 Leg.]

#### YEAS—84

Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Ayotte	Fischer	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Bennet	Gillibrand	Portman
Blumenthal	Graham	Reed
Blunt	Grassley	Reid
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sanders
Capito	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Kirk	Shelby
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Corker	Markey	Thune
Cornyn	McCain	Tillis
Cotton	McCaskill	Toomey
Crapo	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Merkley	Warner
Donnelly	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Murphy	Wyden

#### NAYS—13

Coats	Johnson	Sasse
Cochran	Lankford	Scott
Flake	Lee	Sessions
Hatch	McConnell	
Inhofe	Perdue	

#### NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
-------	------	--------

The motion was agreed to.

#### SCHATZ MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Hawaii relative to same-sex marriage benefits.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, on this motion, I think we are willing to yield

back all time and accept it on a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I would like the RECORD to reflect that had the vote on the Schatz motion to instruct conferees been conducted by a rolcall vote, I would have voted nay.

#### BENNET MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Colorado relative to climate change.

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise to offer a very simple motion to instruct the budget conferees. It encourages the conferees to address the economic and national security threats posed by climate change. During our consideration of the budget, I offered an amendment that outlined these threats and highlighted the need to act. That amendment passed the Senate by a 53-to-47 vote. It was supported by both Republicans and Democrats. The same language should be included in the final budget conference.

During the markup, the Budget Committee adopted a complementary amendment which discussed the importance of climate change initiatives in the Department of Defense. The language should be included in the final budget resolution.

Let's make it clear that the Congress plans to respond to the serious economic and national security threats posed by climate change.

I urge a "yes" vote on this motion to instruct.

I yield the floor, and I ask for a voice vote.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, we are willing to accept it on a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the motion?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

#### FISCHER MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Nebraska relative to equal pay.

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, this motion takes an important step forward by providing necessary updates to current law regarding nonretaliation. The change was supported on a bipartisan during our recent budget debate.

This motion reinforces current law by banning gender discrimination under both the Equal Pay Act and title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Contrary to the claims of some, both of these laws enable women to sue for discrimination.

Furthermore, my motion contains language similar to President Obama's

April 2014 Executive order stating that employees cannot be punished for exercising their First Amendment rights by speaking with employers or coworkers about their wages.

I cannot support the motion of the Senator from Maryland. It removes merit pay, which I believe provides women with opportunities to advance in their careers, and merit pay recognizes a woman's hard work and her contributions. It also eliminates any liability cap under the motion of the Senator from Maryland, which I believe benefits only attorneys and not families. For the first time we are able to do this.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 151 Leg.]

#### YEAS—57

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rounds
Coats	Inhofe	Rubio
Cochran	Isakson	Sasse
Collins	Johnson	Scott
Corker	Kaine	Sessions
Cornyn	King	Shelby
Cotton	Kirk	Sullivan
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Daines	Lee	Tillis
Donnelly	Manchin	Toomey
Enzi	McCain	Warner
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker

#### NAYS—40

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reid
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Klobuchar	Schatz
Brown	Leahy	Schumer
Cantwell	Markey	Shaheen
Cardin	McCaskill	Stabenow
Carper	Menendez	Tester
Casey	Merkley	Udall
Coons	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Franken	Nelson	
Gillibrand	Peters	

#### NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
-------	------	--------

The motion was agreed to.

## MIKULSKI MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Maryland related to equal pay.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I have an alternative and far more comprehensive approach than the Senator from Nebraska just offered. Although I respect her and her advocacy for women, the Mikulski amendment in the well would really finish the job we started with Lilly Ledbetter. Yes, it would deal with the issue of harassment on the job if one asks for information, which the Fischer amendment only dealt with. My amendment would go several steps further. No. 2, it would provide punitive damages for women who have been wrongly denied equal pay for several years. No. 3, it also eliminates the false reasons people give for not paying equal pay for equal work.

The Mikulski amendment is more comprehensive, more robust, and will really finish the job and close the loopholes big corporations have had for years. So if my colleagues like the Fischer amendment, they will be crazy about the Mikulski amendment. Go all the way, not just part of the way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does anyone wish to speak in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. We yield back our time, and we will take a voice vote.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 44, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 152 Leg.]

## YEAS—44

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cantwell	Leahy	Schumer
Cardin	Manchin	Shaheen
Carper	Markey	Stabenow
Casey	McCaskill	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Donnelly	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Franken	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Nelson	

## NAYS—53

Alexander	Fischer	Murkowski
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rubio
Coats	Inhofe	Sasse
Cochran	Isakson	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Sessions
Corker	King	Shelby
Cornyn	Kirk	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Daines	McCain	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	

## NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
-------	------	--------

The motion was rejected.

## FISCHER MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Nebraska relative to paid sick leave.

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. President.

Workplace flexibility is a necessity for our 21st-century families, and Senator KING and I have come up with a proposal that I think really addresses this in a way that is voluntary and incentivizes businesses to truly help families, help those hourly workers meet the needs they are facing in this workplace environment and in their family environments.

I yield the rest of my time to Senator KING.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment and in support of the United States finally joining the civilized nations of the world in providing for family leave for our citizens. I know this amendment doesn't go as far as some would like, but I believe it is very credible, enforceable legislation that can move forward and really change the lives of thousands and millions of people across this country.

I commend the Senator from Nebraska for bringing this amendment forward, and I intend to support it and urge my colleagues to do likewise.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, if all time is yielded back, we would be willing to take a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

## MURRAY MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Washington relative to paid sick leave.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Mr. President.

Congress, we have to vote on an economy that works for all of our families, not just the wealthiest few. Today, 43 million Americans do not have access to paid sick days, and when they are sick, they have to choose between losing money out of their paycheck or toughing it out and showing up to work.

I was delighted that during our budget debate, a bipartisan majority—61 Senators strong—agreed that Congress should allow workers to earn paid sick days. The amendment that just passed is voluntary. It would only benefit a select number of people who work for employers who already do the right thing.

This amendment will make sure that we boost worker productivity and reduce turnover, which are benefits to both employers and employees. I urge my colleagues to vote for this in a strong vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, we would be willing to accept this on a voice vote, and we yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded back, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

## MURRAY MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Washington relating to sequestration elimination.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, Democrats and Republicans agree that the automatic spending cuts across defense and nondefense investments are terrible policy and need to be fixed. The bipartisan Budget Act we passed last Congress did exactly that for the past 2 years and offered us a template for how we can tackle this challenge in a bipartisan way, once again.

We do not need to rely on gimmicks in this budget or the hopes that we will somehow solve this later. We can fix this now in this conference. I urge my colleagues to support this vote instructing the conferees to roll back sequestration, allow the Appropriations Committee to do their work and not kick this can down the road for all of us to address later.

I urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, there is a difference between how it got voted through last year, which was actually an appropriation rather than a budget. This does raise taxes in order to overcome the sequestration. So I am urging a "no" vote. We have agreed to have a voice vote on this one.

We yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded back, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was rejected.

## STABENOW MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2

minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Michigan relating to Medicare cuts.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, my motion would instruct conferees to remove from the final budget resolution any Medicare cuts that would increase out-of-pocket costs for senior citizens, eliminating guaranteed benefits or making structural changes to Medicare by turning it into a voucher-based system or premium support system.

I think one of our greatest concerns in this budget, among many, is the fact that when you add it all up, there are \$566 billion in Medicare cuts in this Senate resolution. Shockingly, it is more than even the House cuts. I would urge that we stand with people who pay into a health care system that works. They have earned those benefits. They are counting on those benefits.

Seniors and people with disabilities across the country need to know Medicare is an intact, guaranteed health care system for them.

I urge support for my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I am going to urge my colleagues to reject this motion to instruct. I credit Senator STABENOW's instincts to approach the question of Medicare seriously. I am sure she knows we all take Medicare's future seriously. There are some problems with Medicare that need to be solved.

The budget shows Medicare's rate of growth for an average annual rate of 6.4 to 5.5 percent over the next 10 years. Why does the budget resolution adopt these numbers? Because Republicans and the President agree we must act on policies which extend the life of the Medicare trust fund.

The budget does this by adopting the President's goal of extending the life of Medicare's hospital insurance trust fund by at least 5 years. According to the Medicare trustees themselves, the hospital insurance fund could be insolvent as early as 2021, just 6 years from now.

Independent actuaries at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid report that over the next 75 years, the Federal Government has promised more than \$35 trillion in Medicare benefits. So Republicans joined with the President in looking to extend the life of the hospital insurance trust fund and make the Medicare program sustainable.

So I ask that you reject this motion to instruct.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, if I might take just 1 more moment, I do not think I used all my time.

I just want to say for the record, the President of the United States is not supporting \$566 billion in cuts to Medicare.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Ms. STABENOW. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 153 Leg.]

#### YEAS—45

Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Peters
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Reid
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schalt
Cardin	Leahy	Schumer
Carper	Manchin	Shaheen
Casey	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	McCaskill	Tester
Donnelly	Menendez	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warren
Franken	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden

#### NAYS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Ayotte	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Isakson	Sessions
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Corker	Kirk	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	
Ernst	Murkowski	

#### NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
-------	------	--------

The motion was rejected.

The Presiding Officer appointed Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CORKER, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. KING conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### RECOGNIZING THE KILGORE COLLEGE RANGERETTES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me today in hon-

oring the world famous Kilgore College Rangerettes on the occasion of their 75th anniversary.

In an effort to increase female enrollment and to keep fans in their seats during halftime at football games, Kilgore College Dean of Students B.E. Masters invited Gussie Nell Davis to create an all-women's precision dance-and-drill team. On September 19, 1940, the Rangerettes performed their first halftime show during a Kilgore College football game.

With their signature Western-styled red, white, and blue uniforms and cowboy hats, the Kilgore College Rangerettes brought show business to the football field. Their precise and graceful performances captured the hearts of the fans and pioneered a brandnew type of halftime show.

The Rangerettes have attained national and international recognition. Dubbed "The Sweethearts of the Gridiron," the Rangerettes travel across the country performing at high-profile events, including every Cotton Bowl halftime show since 1951, the 60th Pearl Harbor Memorial Commemoration, Presidential inaugural events, and multiple Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parades. Their fame and prestige have spread across the globe with performances in Venezuela, the millennial St. Patrick's Day Parade in Ireland, and a 15-day tour of Romania.

The Rangerettes' achievements and honors have been highlighted in cover stories in magazines including Life, Newsweek, Esquire, Texas Monthly, and Texas 24/7. Additionally, they were featured in the Cinerama movie "The Seven Wonders of the World." Today, they continue to set training and performance standards to which other drill teams aspire.

I am honored to congratulate the Kilgore College Rangerettes on their 75th anniversary and look forward to their continued tradition of excellence as they perform across Texas, the United States, and the world.

#### LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Loretta Lynch's nomination to be Attorney General has languished on the Senate floor for 48 days. This unnecessary wait time is twice as long as the last seven Attorney General nominees combined. Under any standard, she is not being treated fairly. For nearly 7 weeks, she has waited for her confirmation vote to be scheduled by the majority leader. She has now earned the support to be confirmed, and if the leader would simply schedule her vote, this eminently qualified prosecutor could get to work as our next Attorney General.

Last month, after Ms. Lynch's nomination had already been pending on the floor for weeks, the majority leader inexplicably chose to hold her nomination hostage until he got his way on a partisan provision in unrelated legislation. That Loretta Lynch is being denied a confirmation vote over human