

We must insist that President Obama immediately produce a complete, detailed, and realistic plan to confront, degrade, and defeat the Islamic State. This plan must include realistic, well-substantiated estimates of timeframes, resources required, expected allies, and anticipated obstacles. Also, it must include clear definitions of milestones and metrics of success. Most importantly, the plan must include clear accountability. I have introduced an amendment to the Defense authorization bill that will require just that—a serious, credible, complete strategy for addressing the threat posed by ISIS.

President Obama has shown a tendency to blame others—the Pentagon or allies or Sunnis or the Iraqi Government or Congress—for his own failures of leadership in this effort; therefore, we must demand a coherent, realistic plan so the American people can properly apportion the credit for success or the blame for failure where it belongs.

Let me briefly talk about a couple of other amendments I have introduced, and I am hopeful we can include these two amendments in the managers' package.

Amendment No. 1705 addresses the Department of Defense's present policy of not allowing Active-Duty flag and general officers to visit our friends in Taiwan. Instead, the DOD relies on retired flag and general officers—retired officers to visit Taiwan in what can only be seen as appeasing Communist China.

It is difficult for military officials in both Taiwan and the United States to discuss contingency responses when Active-Duty U.S. generals and flag officers are not able to meet regularly with their Taiwanese counterparts. Without visiting Taiwan, they are not able to familiarize themselves with Taiwan's command centers, terrain, and operational capabilities.

Active-Duty U.S. generals and flag officers have to be able to visit Taiwan and see its military in action in order to gain a better understanding of Taiwan's armed forces and the weapons they require for self-defense.

In the event of an emergency, such as humanitarian assistance or a disaster relief mission, senior officers from Taiwan and the United States will have little, if any, experience working together to save the lives of thousands of Taiwanese citizens and Americans living abroad in Taiwan.

My amendment would simply state that the Department of Defense should undertake a program of senior military officer exchanges with Taiwan. Note that this amendment does not require such exchanges. I do not believe in tying the military's hands in this sort of matter, but I do believe it is important that the Senate go on record as concerned about the current policy of refusing to allow such exchanges. The armed forces of Taiwan are a very valuable partner of the U.S. military. These visits by our generals and admirals will encourage Taiwan to make increased

investments in their national defense, especially in light of the belligerent behavior demonstrated by the Chinese.

I understand that there is bipartisan agreement on this amendment, and I hope and trust that we can include this measure in any upcoming managers' package.

Finally, I have offered amendment No. 1877, which would require the Secretary of the Navy to submit to both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees a report detailing the potential impacts to the industrial base if the July 2017 start date for the refueling and complex overhaul of the USS George Washington is delayed by 6 months, 1 year, or 2 years.

As we learned last year when the administration briefly considered postponing the scheduled overhaul of the USS George Washington, such delays only drive up costs because of the uncertainty they create among the industrial base. I hope to avoid a repeat of that mistake by requiring the Navy to report on the true costs of any delay.

I hope the Senate will agree to this amendment.

Once again, I thank Senator MCCAIN for his leadership on the Defense authorization bill, and I hope the Senate will act to pass this critically important bill without delay. This is one of the most essential bills this Congress takes up each year, and to deter this for any political reason simply is not acceptable when our troops' lives and safety are at risk. They are there to defend us. They need our support, and they need it now.

I yield floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the pending business.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1735) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McCain amendment No. 1463, in the nature of a substitute.

McCain amendment No. 1456 (to amendment No. 1463), to require additional information supporting long-range plans for construction of naval vessels.

Cornyn amendment No. 1486 (to amendment No. 1463), to require reporting on energy security issues involving Europe and the Russian Federation, and to express the sense of Congress regarding ways the United States could help vulnerable allies and partners with energy security.

Markey amendment No. 1645 (to amendment No. 1463), to express the sense of Con-

gress that exports of crude oil to United States allies and partners should not be determined to be consistent with the national interest if those exports would increase energy prices in the United States for American consumers or businesses or increase the reliance of the United States on imported oil.

Reed (for Blumenthal) modified amendment No. 1564 (to amendment No. 1463), to enhance protections accorded to servicemembers and their spouses.

McCain (for Paul) modified amendment No. 1543 (to amendment No. 1463), to strengthen employee cost savings suggestions programs within the Federal Government.

Reed (for Durbin) modified amendment No. 1559 (to amendment No. 1463), to prohibit the award of Department of Defense contracts to inverted domestic corporations.

Fischer/Booker amendment No. 1825 (to amendment No. 1463), to authorize appropriations for national security aspects of the Merchant Marine for fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

McCain (for Hatch) amendment No. 1911 (to amendment No. 1456), to require a report on the Department of Defense definition of and policy regarding software sustainment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to tell my colleagues that I think we are winding down here. We have several other issues to address, but I think it is very possible that we could see the end here for final passage of the bill. There are still some issues that need to be resolved, but I am grateful for the progress all of my colleagues have made on both sides of the aisle.

I would like to call up and speak briefly on McCain amendment No. 1482. This amendment would prohibit the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of a military department from funding or conducting medical research or development projects unless the Secretary determines that the research or project is designed to protect, enhance, or restore the health and safety of members of the Armed Forces through phases of deployment, combat, medical recovery, and rehabilitation.

I will not seek a vote on this amendment, but I will say that it is an issue which must be addressed if we are going to spend American tax dollars on defending this Nation, the security, and the men and women who are serving.

What I am going to show my colleagues is what happens with almost any bad deal around here, and that is the incredible increase in congressionally directed spending on medical research which is on the Department of Defense authorization bill—not on the Health and Human Services appropriations but on Defense. When we are cutting defense, when we are experiencing all the bad results of sequestration, we continue to grow to nearly \$1 billion in medical research that has nothing to do with defense.

I am all for medical research. I am all in. The National Institutes of Health is doing great things. I am all for it. But when we take it out of defense spending rather than what it should be taken out of, which is Health

and Human Services, then I object to that.

I am aware of the outcry that has taken place at these various organizations which are dedicated to improving the health of Americans, and so therefore of course I am not subjecting it to a vote. But it is outrageous that this has gone up to nearly \$1 billion in spending that is taken out of the Department of Defense.

My friends, what it is, is the Willie Sutton syndrome. When the famous bank robber Willie Sutton was asked why he robbed banks, he said, "Because that's where the money is."

So this medical research, which has nothing to do with defense, comes out of the Department of Defense. It is wrong, and it needs to stop, as every scarce dollar that is earmarked for defense must go to the defense of this Nation.

I know what the response is going to be: Oh my God, MCCAIN, you want to take money away from—fill in the blank. No, I am not asking to take money from any medical research; I am asking that it be put where it belongs, and that is not in the Department of Defense. It is not about disputing the great value of much of the medical research Congress and America's taxpayers make possible. I will match my record on support for medical research with anyone's. Any person who has reached my advanced age likely has some firsthand experience with the miracles of modern medicine and gratitude for all who support it. Much of the medical research for which Congress appropriates money each year helps to extend and improve the lives of many Americans. This amendment is not about the value of medical research or whether Congress should support it.

Immediately I will hear the response waiting now: Oh, MCCAIN, you want to cut very beneficial research that helps the lives of Americans. No, No, I do not. I want it appropriated from the appropriate appropriations bill, not from defense.

This amendment is absolutely about what departments and agencies of our government should be funding what kinds of medical research and specifically what the proper role of the Department of Defense is in this work.

Over the past 20 years, Congress has added billions of dollars to the Department of Defense's medical research portfolio for disease research that has nothing to do with defense. Since 1992, Congress has appropriated almost \$10 billion for medical research in the Department of Defense's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, and only about \$2.4 billion of that \$10 billion was for research that could be considered in any way relevant to the military.

To be sure, the Department of Defense has a proper and vital role to play in medical research that benefits the unique work of our men and women in uniform in areas such as prosthetics, traumatic brain injury, and spinal cord

injury, among others. However, through years of congressionally directed spending, the DOD medical research program has been used to fund research on breast cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer, genetic disorders such as muscular dystrophy, and even mad cow disease.

In other words, over the last 2 decades, in a time of war and fiscal challenge, even despite sequestration, Congress has appropriated \$7.3 billion for medical research that is totally unrelated to the military—money that the Department of Defense did not request and our military did not need.

This graph right behind me shows the explosive growth that has occurred in this program since 1992. At that time, in 1992, Congress had funded one research project for breast cancer. Over time, that has now grown to 30 separate medical research projects funded by the Congress. Funding has increased by almost 4,000 percent, from \$25 million in 1992 to almost \$1 billion last year. I will repeat that for the benefit of my colleagues. Spending on medical research at DOD—nearly 75 percent of which has nothing to do with the military—has grown 4,000 percent since 1992. Even the late Senator from Alaska, Ted Stevens, under whose leadership the original funding for breast cancer was added, reversed course in 2006 because the money would be "going to medical research instead of the needs of the military."

During the floor debate on the annual Defense appropriations bill, Senator Stevens had this to say:

We could not have any more money going out of the Defense bill to take care of medical research when medical research is basically a function of the NIH. . . . It is not our business. I confess, I am the one who made the first mistake years ago. I am the one who suggested that we include some money for breast cancer research. It was languishing at the time. . . . Since that time it has grown to \$750 million . . . in the last bill we had, dealing with medical research that had nothing to do with the Department of Defense.

My friends, when Senator Ted Stevens is saying that a congressionally directed spending program has gotten out of hand, we know there is a problem. Yet, despite the urgings of Senator Stevens in 2006, the problem has only gotten worse since then. Last year alone Congress appropriated \$971.6 million for medical research programs that the Department of Defense did not request in its budget. More than \$280 million of that money was appropriated for cancer research in the defense budget while six other Federal agencies spent more than \$50 billion on cancer research in fiscal year 2015.

I will put that in perspective. For the amount of money that Congress appropriated for medical research last year at the Department of Defense—again, most of which had nothing to do with the military and which the Department did not request—we could have bought 12 F-18 Superhornets, 2 littoral combat ships or roughly 1 Army brigade combat team.

My friends, in these days of sequestration, that is not acceptable. Once again, I am sure every Member of this body agrees that this research is vitally important to Americans suffering from these diseases, to the families and friends who care for them, and to all of those who know the pain and grief of losing a loved one. But this research should not be funded by the Department of Defense. It belongs in civilian departments and agencies of our government.

Appropriating money in this way only harms our national security by reducing the funding available for military-relevant medical research that helps protect service men and women on the battlefield and for military capabilities they desperately need to perform their missions. Furthermore, this kind of misguided spending only puts decisionmaking about medical research in the hands of lobbyists and politicians instead of medical experts where it belongs.

So I say to my colleagues, what I had proposed and will not seek a vote on—because the result is very clear—is a commonsense amendment. It focuses the Department's research efforts on medical research that will lead to life-saving advancements in battlefield medicine and new therapies for recovery and rehabilitation of servicemembers wounded both physically and mentally on the battlefield. It could finally begin the long overdue process of shifting the hundreds of millions of dollars of nonmilitary medical research spending out of the Department of Defense and into the appropriate civilian departments and agencies of our government. That is a change that needs to start now, and I hope my colleagues, especially my friends on the Appropriations Committee, will make that happen.

I want to point out again that we started in fiscal year 1992 with \$25 million. We are now up to nearly \$1 trillion, and I am sure that the appropriators have an equal or like amount that they are proposing.

I see that my colleague from Illinois is here on the floor, and I know he will defend with vigor, passion, love, and every emotion he has what we are doing because of those who are suffering from illnesses such as breast cancer and all of the other terrible things that afflict our society. I say to my friends who will come to the floor in a high dudgeon over what I am proposing: I am not saying that we should cut any of these programs—not a single one. We should probably increase them. But let's put them where they belong, and that is not in the Department of Defense.

While I have the floor, I want to talk about some other issues. Former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates said in an interview over the weekend:

What it feels like to me is really what the President said last week, which was a lack of strategy. Just adding a few hundred troops doing more of the same I think is not likely

to make much of a difference. . . . We should have had a strategy a year ago. . . . And we have to be willing, if we think ISIS is truly a threat to the United States and to our interests, we have to be willing to put Americans at risk. That's just a fact of life. . . . [I]f the mission [President Obama] has set for the military is to degrade and destroy ISIS, the rules of engagement that he has imposed on them prevent them from achieving that mission.

I don't know anyone who is more respected by both sides of the aisle and served Presidents of both parties in key administrative positions than Secretary of Defense Bob Gates. Quite often, I and my friend from South Carolina, Senator GRAHAM, are accused of being biased and partisan and attacking the President and his strategies in a partisan fashion. I will remind my colleagues that in 2006 Senator GRAHAM and I called for the resignation of the Secretary of Defense, who was then in a Republican administration. In 2006, we said: We are losing the war. In 2006, I had a spirited argument with then-General Dempsey—who was in charge of training the Iraqis and assured me everything was going fine—when I was showing him the facts when things were going to hell in a handbasket. So to somehow accuse me, Senator GRAHAM, and others of making these comments about a feckless and without-foundation foreign policy that is allowing ISIS to succeed does not bear scrutiny.

I agree with former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates when he says: "What it feels like to me is really what the President said last week, which was a lack of a strategy." There is a lack of a strategy.

I want to tell my colleagues that we will be having hearings when we get through with this bill, and we will try to figure out what the Congress and the American people should know about what is happening in the world, not just in the Middle East.

Facts are stubborn things. The fact is we can knock off an ISIS or Al Qaeda leader, and we can trumpet that as a great victory and thank God that it has happened. But to think that really has a significant, long-term impact on the ability of ISIS, Al Qaeda, and other terrorist organizations to not reconstitute and continue their success, with occasional setbacks—which they are achieving and spreading that poison throughout the Middle East and the latest being Libya, aided and abetted in many cases by the Iranians—is obviously a fact that cannot be denied.

For example USA Today reports: "Death of al-Qaeda leader may benefit Islamic State."

The U.S. missile strike that killed al-Qaeda's No. 2 leader is another in a string of devastating blows to the terrorist group's old-guard leadership that might inadvertently help a more brutal terror group: the Islamic State, analysts said.

The Washington Post Editorial Board writes today: "A dangerous mission in Libya requires a firm approach."

The Washington Post editorial board, not known as a rightwing periodical, writes:

It's good those two militants have been taken off the battlefield, but their elimination will not remedy the growing crises in Libya and Yemen. In that respect, the operations are another example of the limited benefits of President Obama's narrow approach to counterterrorism.

The New York Times reports today: "As Vladimir Putin Talks More Missiles and Might, Cost Tells Another Story."

Reuters reports today: "China gives more details on South China Sea facilities."

This is very disturbing. I say to my colleagues and all of us—whether we are members of the Intelligence Committee or members of the Armed Services Committee—that we must address this issue of cyber security.

My friends, we just went through a long back-and-forth debate and discussion over whether we should restrict the kinds of telephone information and whether it be shared or not shared and who should store it and all of that. Meanwhile, the Wall Street Journal reported on Friday: "Hackers Likely Stole Security-Clearance Information During Breach of Government Agencies."

Hackers who raided the U.S. government's personnel office gained access to secret background investigations conducted on current and former employees, senior administration officials said Friday—an ominous development in the recent threat of federal data, one of the largest in history.

The Washington Post editorial board writes today: "A pathetic breach of responsibility on cybersecurity."

[T]he breach of Office of Personnel Management networks this year . . . represents a failure of stewardship and a serious external threat.

After the OPM suffered a cyberintrusion in 2014, its director, Katherine Archuleta, asked Congress in February for \$26 million in additional funding for cybersecurity. She said the agency stores more personally identifiable information than almost any other in the government, including banking data for more than 2 million people and background investigations for more than 30 million, among them individuals being considered for military enlistment, federal job appointments and employment by federal contractors. "It is imperative," Ms. Archuleta wrote, that . . . "threats to identity theft, financial espionage, etc., are real, dynamic and must be averted." They were not averted.

In April, the new breach was uncovered. Intruders had stolen the names, Social Security numbers, pay history, health records and other data of some 4.2 million current and former federal workers.

It seems to us that just slamming doors and building more firewalls may be an insufficient response to an assault of this magnitude. An essential aspect of deterrence is the credible threat of retaliation.

Why do I quote from that? It is because every time we ask a question as to what the policy is, whether it is strictly defensive against a cyber attack or whether offensive in order to prevent one, the policy has "not been determined."

I say we have to address this issue. First of all, we have to have an administration policy or that policy some-

how may be developed in the Congress, which is not the right way to do it, obviously.

So I intend to work with Senator BURR, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator REED, and others in holding hearings and figuring out what we need to do because this is a serious threat in many respects that we have faced in recent times.

Finally, I wish to mention this: "Former CIA Chief Says Government Data Breach Could Help China Recruit Spies."

Retired Gen. Michael Hayden, who once led the National Security Agency and later the Central Intelligence Agency, said the threat of millions of U.S. Government personnel records could allow China to recruit U.S. officials as spies.

The general said:

This is a tremendously big deal. My deepest emotion is embarrassment.

He said the personnel records were a "legitimate foreign intelligence target."

He continued:

To grab the equivalent in the Chinese system, I would not have thought twice. I would not have asked permission . . . This is not "shame on China." This is "shame on us" for not protecting that kind of information.

So I urge my colleagues to understand that this new issue of cyber security is an area which the United States of America, in the view of many experts, does not have a significant advantage. It is an area where, in some respects, we may even be at a disadvantage, if we look at the extraordinary events that have taken place in the issue of cyber security. The latest information, of course, of 4 million people has to get our attention. It has to get the attention of the administration. We need to work together. I stand ready—and I know my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do as well—to sit down and come up with some policies and then implement those policies into ways of combating this new form of warfare we call cyber.

Again, I anticipate the comments of my friend from Illinois who will vigorously defend all of the research that is done in medical research. I wish to point out, again, that I am not in opposition to one single dime of any kind of medical research. I say it is coming out of the wrong place. We cannot make a logical argument that this belongs in the Department of Defense. Some of it does, and I have pointed that out. The majority of it belongs with other agencies.

When we are facing sequestration and when we are cutting our national security to the bone, according to our military leaders who have said that continued sequestration puts the lives of the men and women who are serving in the military in danger, we cannot afford another \$1 billion to be spent on medical research. We want the money spent on medical research. We want it spent from the right place.

I look forward to addressing the remaining amendments with my colleague and friend from Rhode Island.

Hopefully, we can wrap up the Defense authorization bill sometime very soon. Then we can move on to conference and then bring the bill back after the conference to the floor of the Senate so we can carry out our first and most urgent responsibility; that is, the security of the Nation and men and women who defend it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me say at the outset that the Senator from Arizona, although we are of opposite political faith, has been my friend and colleague for a long time—since we first were elected together in a class in the House of Representatives. Our friendship and relationship has had its peaks and valleys. I hope we are at a peak at this moment. I will concede, before I say a word about his amendment, that I have no question in my mind, nor should anyone, about the commitment of the Senator from Arizona to the men and women who show extraordinary courage in battling for the United States of America in our military. The Senator's own personal life is a testament to his dedication to the U.S. military. I know he has brought that dedication to his service as the chairman of the Armed Services Committee and in bringing this authorization bill to the floor.

Secondly, I don't question his commitment to medical research either. As he said, when we reach a certain stage in life, we may value it more because we realize our own vulnerabilities and the vulnerabilities of those we love. So what I am about to say is not a reflection of his commitment to the military nor his commitment to basic medical research, but I do question this amendment, which Senator MCCAIN has said he will not offer but has filed, and I have been prepared for several days now to debate.

Here is the question: Should we have within the Department of Defense a medical research capacity? I think yes, and I think for obvious reasons—because there are certain challenges to the men and women who serve in our military and to their families which relate to their military service.

Secondly, if we are going to have such a military research program, should politicians and lobbyists, as the Senator said, be able to pick the diseases and pick the research? No, of course not. That is why this appropriations bill, which we will consider later this week, and this authorization bill address a situation where this is done by competitive grant. In other words, if we have researchers at some hospital who are researching a medical condition important to our military, we have to compete for it. It is not automatic. The decision is not made by Senators or Congressmen. It is made by medical professionals about which research makes a difference. So I think medical research is important to our military. Politicians shouldn't pick

and choose those researchers and those research grants; it ought to be done by professionals.

Third, this undertaking in the Department of Defense is substantial. It is about \$1.8 billion for all of the different medical research. In perspective, the funding for the National Institutes of Health is about \$30 billion. This is relatively small.

Dr. Francis Collins heads up the NIH and I went to him and I said: Doctor, I am working on this defense medical research bill; I want to make sure we don't waste a penny. I don't want to duplicate anything you are doing at NIH.

He said: Trust me, we will not. We coordinate everything we do. What they do is complementary to our work and what we do is complimentary to their work. We are not wasting a penny.

So I think those three things are an important starting point in this debate. Medical research is important to national defense. Politicians have no role in choosing who is going to do the medical research. Also, whatever we do is going to be coordinated with medical research at leading agencies such as the National Institutes of Health.

There are a lot of items on this list of research that I think very few people would ever quarrel with. Should we have a joint warfighter medical account in research? Should we have orthotics and prosthetics research for those who have lost a limb in military service? How about a military burn research unit, wound care research, military dental research—all of these topics relate to actual service.

The only specifics which the Senator from Arizona raised, questioning why the Department of Defense would get involved in research, I would like to address. One item he specified is breast cancer. It is true the second largest undertaking for breast cancer research in America takes place at the Department of Defense. It started there—and I will be honest—I remember why. It started there because the funding through the National Institutes of Health was not reliable or predictable, and the Department of Defense made a commitment: We will make our commitment to breast cancer research.

Is there a reason it would be in the Department of Defense? Even though the Senator from Arizona has raised questions about it, I wish to call his attention to the following: In 2013, researchers in the Department of Defense developed a vaccine that promises to protect women against a recurrence of breast cancer. Breast cancer is a disease diagnosed in female troops at a rate 20 percent to 40 percent higher than the civilian population. I am a liberal arts lawyer, so I don't know why. Can I figure out why more women in our military are diagnosed with breast cancer than women in our civilian population? I don't know the answer to that, but I want to know the answer to that. I want to know if there

is something—anything—environmental or otherwise that our troops, and particularly women in the military, are exposed to that makes them more likely to come down with a diagnosis of breast cancer. Is that a legitimate question at the Department of Defense? It is obvious it is.

How good are these researchers if we put several billion dollars into breast cancer research in the Department of Defense? The researchers recently completed a 10-year study of this vaccine known as E75, tested on more than 100 female soldiers recovering from breast cancer and they had a similar test group of civilian women. The research is happening within the Cancer Vaccine Development Program, an Army research network studying vaccines' potential to fight breast, ovarian, uterine, and prostate cancers.

Researchers indicated that in trials, the vaccine cut the risk in half that a woman's breast cancer will return—in half. Is it worth it? Is it worth it for us, through the Department of Defense, to put money into breast cancer research when female troops have a rate of breast cancer diagnosis 20 to 40 percent higher, when these researchers are finding a vaccine which in trials is cutting the recurrence of breast cancer in half compared to other populations? It seems very obvious to me.

This is not the first time the defense researchers in breast cancer have done extraordinary things. In 1993, defense researchers developed Herceptin, now FDA approved, and one of the most widely used drugs to fight breast cancer—developed at the Department of Defense. Do we want to take the research decisions away from the researchers?

The amendment which the Senator from Arizona offers would give the Secretary of Defense the last word as to whether we do this research. Now, I have known Secretaries of Defense, and they are talented individuals, but when it comes to making medical decisions about medical research, I don't think any of them are qualified to do that. Let's leave it in the hands of the professionals, not in the hands of politicians, not in the hands of political appointees, and not in the hands of bureaucrats.

Let me also say this: When we look at the list of diseases that are studied at the Department of Defense, some of them may sound odd. Lou Gehrig's disease—ALS—why would we include that on a list for Department of Defense research? Let me explain. Men and women who have served in the U.S. military are 60 percent more likely than civilians to develop Lou Gehrig's disease—men and women who serve in the military. Gulf war veterans are twice as likely as the general population to develop Lou Gehrig's disease. Should we invest money for medical research in the Department of Defense for Lou Gehrig's disease? And then should we ask the basic question, Why? Why would it be more likely that one

would develop Lou Gehrig's disease if one served in the U.S. military or if one was in the Gulf war? Those are legitimate medical questions that relate to our military. For the Senator to offer an amendment to take out any of that type of research, I think that is the wrong thing to do.

We don't have to speak about traumatic brain injury. Everybody knows what has happened. We have seen the returning veterans—roadside bombs—what they have gone through. Between 48,000 and 169,000—169,000—military servicemembers who have served and are serving in Iraq and in Afghanistan have developed post-traumatic epilepsy—head injuries. Post-traumatic epilepsy is a form of epilepsy resulting from traumatic brain injury. I put a provision in here for competitive grants on epilepsy and seizures for this reason: \$7.5 million—we have 169,000 who are dealing with these traumatic brain injuries and dealing with seizures and epilepsy afterward. Is this a legitimate area of Department of Defense medical research? Absolutely. We cannot ignore the reality of what our troops have gone through and what they need when they come home. To cut out this research would be a mistake.

Let me also say, in 2013 alone, 100,000 servicemembers sought treatment for seizures at our veterans hospitals. It is a serious, serious problem.

I could go through every single element I have here of medical research at the Department of Defense. I hope the examples I have given illustrate that men and women who serve our country face medical challenges which the ordinary civilian population may not face. I think we have a special obligation to them to engage in the research that can make their lives whole again and give them a chance to come back from our military and have a happy and full life, which we promised them. We said: If you will hold up your hand and give an oath to America that you will risk your life for our country, we will stand by you when you come home, and that includes more than a GI bill to go to school. It is more than a place to live. It is even more than basic medical care. It involves medical research.

The final point I wish to make is this. This Senator will never apologize for trying to come up with more money for medical research. Never. Once every 67 seconds in America someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's in America. When my staff told me that, I said you have to be wrong. They are not. It is once every 67 seconds. We spent \$200 billion in Medicare and Medicaid on Alzheimer's patients last year, not to mention the devastating costs to individual families who have someone they love suffering from this disease.

We don't have an Alzheimer's provision. Well, we have a small Alzheimer's provision in this particular medical research bill. Am I going to stand here to apologize for putting \$12 million in Alz-

heimer's research? I will tell you, if we could delay the onset of Alzheimer's by 1 month, by 2 months, by 6 months, God willing, if we could find a cure, we would more than pay for this medical research over and over and over again. We would spare people from the pain and suffering they go through with this disease and spare their families as well. When it comes to medical research, I will never stand and apologize for putting money into medical research. Every one of us has someone we love in our family facing a terrible, threatening, scary diagnosis and praying to God that there has been some area of research that may find a cure or a surgery. That is what this is about.

I am glad the Senator has withdrawn his amendment. I repeat what I said at the outset. I will never ever question his commitment to our members in uniform and our veterans, nor will I question his commitment to medical research, but I will be sending him information that I think demonstrates what we are doing here has a direct impact on military families and military veterans.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD three pages of organizations that support my effort to stop this amendment.

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

GROUPS OPPOSING THE MCCAIN AMENDMENT
TO PROHIBIT CERTAIN TYPES OF MEDICAL
RESEARCH PROGRAMS AT DOD

(June 16, 2015)

INDIVIDUAL LETTERS/GRASSROOTS ACTIVATION

The Arc; The Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance; National Breast Cancer Coalition; The American Urological Association (AUA); Alzheimer's Association; Arthritis Foundation; Easter Seals.

DEFENSE HEALTH RESEARCH CONSORTIUM SIGN-
ON LETTER/GRASSROOTS

ALS Association; American Association for Dental Research; American Association of Clinical Urologists; American Cancer Society; Cancer Action Network; American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; American Dental Association; American Gastroenterological Association; American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy; American Society for Reproductive Medicine; American Urological Association; Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation; Arthritis Foundation; Autism Speaks; Bladder Cancer Action Network; Breast Cancer Fund.

Children's Tumor Foundation; Colon Cancer Alliance; Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America; Cure HHT; Debbie's Dream Foundation; Curing Stomach Cancer; Digestive Disease National Coalition; Epilepsy Foundation; Fight Colorectal Cancer; FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered; Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne; GBS/CIPD Foundation International; International Myeloma Foundation; Kidney Cancer Association; LAM Foundation; Littlest Tumor Foundation; Living Beyond Breast Cancer; Lung Cancer Alliance.

Lupus Research Institute; Lymphoma Research Foundation; Malecare Cancer Support; Melanoma Research Foundation; Men's Health Network; Muscular Dystrophy Association; National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions; National Autism Association; National Multiple Sclerosis Society;

Neurofibromatosis Network; Ovarian Cancer National Alliance; Pancreatic Cancer Action Network; Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy; Parkinson's Action Network; Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation.

Preventing Colorectal Cancer; Prostate Cancer Foundation; Prostate Health Education Network; Pulmonary Hypertension Association; Research!America; Scleroderma Foundation; Sleep Research Society; Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates; Society of Gynecologic Oncology; Society for Women's Health Research; Sturge-Weber Foundation; Susan G. Komen; Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance; Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network; Veterans for Common Sense; Veterans Health Council; Vietnam Veterans of America; ZERO-The End of Prostate Cancer.

OVARIAN CANCER COMMUNITY LETTER

Ovarian Cancer National Alliance; Ovarian Cancer Research Fund; Foundation for Women's Cancer; #gynccsm Community; Arkansas Ovarian Cancer Coalition; Bluegrass Ovarian Cancer Support Inc.; Bright Pink; CancerDancer; Capital Ovarian Cancer Organization, Inc.; Caring Together, Inc.; Celma Mastry Ovarian Cancer Foundation; Colorado Ovarian Cancer Alliance; Feel Teal Club; FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered; Georgia Ovarian Cancer Alliance.

GRACE'S Gynecologic Cancer Support; Help Keep a Sister Alive; HERA Women's Cancer Foundation; Hope for Heather; Kaleidoscope of Hope of New Jersey; Life of Teal, Inc.; Lilies of the Valley; Lydia's Legacy; Michigan Ovarian Cancer Alliance; Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance; NormaLeah Ovarian Cancer Foundation; Oasis of Southern California; Ovacom USA; Ovar'Coming Together; Ovarian & Breast Cancer Alliance; Ovarian and Gynecologic Cancer Coalition/Rhonda's Club; Ovarian Awareness of Kentucky.

Ovarian Cancer 101; Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Arizona; Ovarian Cancer Alliance of California; Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Greater Cincinnati; Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Ohio; Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Oregon and SW Washington; Ovarian Cancer Alliance of San Diego; Ovarian Cancer Coalition of California; Ovarian Cancer Education and Research Network (OCERN); Ovarian Cancer Orange County Alliance; Perspectives Association; Sandy Rollman Ovarian Cancer Foundation; SHARE.

Sherie Hildreth Ovarian Cancer Foundation; South Carolina Ovarian Cancer Foundation; Sue DiNapoli Ovarian Cancer Society; Susan Poorman Blackie Ovarian Cancer Foundation; Teal Diva; Teal Tea Foundation; Teal Toes; Tell Every Amazing Lady About Ovarian Cancer (T.E.A.L.); The Betty Allen Ovarian Cancer Foundation; The Judith Liebhenthal Robinson Ovarian Cancer Foundation (Judy's Mission); The Rose Mary Flanagan Ovarian Cancer Foundation; Turn the Towns Teal; Utah Ovarian Cancer Alliance; Wisconsin Ovarian Cancer Alliance; WNY Ovarian Cancer Project; Women's and Girls Cancer Alliance; You'll Never Walk Alone.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I, too, would like to speak on this National Defense Authorization Act and observe that we just, I think, had a very important exchange between the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee and the Senator from Illinois. They disagree on an amendment that will actually not be voted

on, but I was struck by the remarks of the Senator from Illinois and would observe to my colleagues that he has made a compelling case in favor of the bill, which I appreciate, and in favor of the proposition that the President of the United States should, in fact, sign this bill. So I appreciate my colleague from Illinois pointing that out, and I hope people at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, and in the Oval Office even, are listening to this stirring defense of the legislation from the Senator from Illinois.

We are indeed moving in the right direction on this bill. I came to the floor last week to talk about the importance of this act. I reminded my colleagues at the time that this has always been a bipartisan matter. For some 53 years, this Senate, with people who have come long before me, has supported this particular bill on a bipartisan basis, and that is as it should be.

I also disagreed strongly in my remarks last week with the remarks of the distinguished minority leader, the Senator from Nevada, who said that taking up this bill was a waste of time because the President had stated his intention to veto the bill. I made the point at that time that the success of our Nation's premier Defense bill can never be a waste of time. Taking care of the troops, taking care of the men and women who have stepped forward as volunteers, can never be considered a waste of time. I really think that more and more of our colleagues are coming around to that conclusion.

We have made so much progress in the weeks we have been dealing with this. I would remind my colleagues that we started off in the Armed Services Committee with a complete partisan divide. It was troubling at the time, but we have recovered from that. When we began consideration of this bill in the Senate Armed Services Committee, we were told that every Republican would vote aye and every Democrat would vote no. That was definitely a concern to those who obviously know that this has to be bipartisan, that national security has to be something that has the support from both sides of the aisle.

As we worked through the process, as the distinguished ranking member the Senator from Rhode Island worked with the chairman of the committee Senator McCAIN, we gained more and more support for this legislation in committee. At the end of the day, only four Members of the entire committee voted no. So the vote was 22 in favor and only 4 opposed in the committee—again, moving in the right direction.

We got to the floor last week, and we heard the statement that this is a waste of time. I think we are moving away from that. Indeed, yesterday we voted on cloture on the bill. I have in my hand a very encouraging vote tally of 83 Senators in favor of this bill on this motion for cloture. There were 83 in favor and only 15 opposed.

At the beginning of my brief remarks, I would just say it is encour-

aging to me that both at the committee level and also on the Senate floor, we are getting to where the Senate has always been on this bipartisan issue, and we certainly need to. We need to authorize the best tools available for our troops, the best training available for our troops, and our veterans, as the distinguished Senator from Illinois just pointed out, are in need of the support this bill gives them. In addition, our veterans are ready for much needed reforms to improve retirement and to improve military benefits.

Of course, we live in a very unstable and insecure world. We need this bill to meet the threats that are out there. We wish they weren't there. I wish things were better in Iraq. I wish our hard-fought gains had not been tossed away by our precipitous withdrawal, but, in fact, the situation has worsened in Iraq, and we need this bill to protect our interests there. We face old Cold War tensions with the reasserting of an aggressive Russia, in the form of President Vladimir Putin, increasingly intent on restoring the Soviet Empire. We face other realities: cyber terrorism, the nuclear ambitions of Iran, which we heard so much about recently, and we need to reaffirm that the United States has a capable and strong U.S. defense.

Let me for a brief few moments come home to my home State of Mississippi and say why people in my State feel so strongly about this. Of course, we have military bases from north to south in Mississippi. Our own Mississippians, as in all of our States, have stepped forward and are volunteering and serving capably. We also manufacture so many things in my State of Mississippi that are important for national security. We make unmanned aerial vehicles in Mississippi. Some of the finest ships in the world are made on the gulf coast of Mississippi. Helicopters, radars, and other electronic war technology, all of these are manufactured in my home State. So for people in Mississippi, I think the talk of this bill—these weeks on the floor—being a waste of time does not ring true.

A few examples: In my hometown of Tupelo, MS, this bill recognizes the importance of the Army's Apache helicopters and the Tupelo Army Aviation Support Facility. At Columbus Air Force Base, where over 2,000 personnel serve, this bill and the Defense appropriations bill, which the Senator from Maryland may speak about in a few moments—these pieces of legislation allow our student pilots to have adequate training and adequate flying training hours.

In Starkville, MS, the authorization and appropriations bills are integral to completing the Army Reserve Center for equipping and training military personnel. Along the gulf coast, these Defense bills—the authorization and the appropriations bills—would support a new Army National Guard aviation depot at the Gulfport-Biloxi Airport, as

well as the continued mission of over 11,000 Americans who work at Keesler Air Force Base. I am proud of these, and I am proud of what they do for our overall national defense of the United States.

Mississippi is just one of many States to take part in this. Simply put, the future of our defense should not be put in jeopardy because of disagreements about unrealistic domestic funding issues. We can get to those issues, but defending the United States of America is something only the Federal Government can do. We can't devolve national defense down to the States. We have to do it in this building, in this body, on this floor of the Senate. Besides, it is well worth saying and reminding my colleagues that this bill gives the President every penny he has requested for national defense. It meets the \$612 billion requested by President Obama in his budget. So it really should not be partisan at all.

I will go back to what the Senator from Illinois said. He made a stirring defense of this legislation, I think one that should be listened to by the President of the United States. He should listen to the fact that we had an 83-to-15 vote on cloture, and we had a 22-to-4 vote in the Appropriations Committee.

We have had a few partisan flareups along the course of this legislation, but I think as we get to the end of the day, I am more and more encouraged about the prospect of this bill. I think we can pass it tomorrow with an overwhelming vote, which shows we are voting for it not as Republicans, not as Democrats but as Americans, because we want to defend the vital national interests of the United States of America.

Thank you, Mr. President, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Thank you very much.

Mr. President, standing here listening to the debate and discussion by colleagues on both sides of the aisle really makes the point that many of us are saying. We need a new budget agreement. We have people—I think we all agree on both sides of the aisle that we need to defend America. There is no doubt about that. In order to do that, we need to look at national security both in its funding for the Department of Defense, but we also need to be looking at what are the components to national security. Many of the key agencies that are not in the Department of Defense are also important to the national security.

Yet, at the same time, we have defense with this budget gimmick, and that is what it is. It is a budget gimmick to avoid the caps we have on spending on both defense and discretionary spending. What this bill is, is a gimmick to have the money through something called OCO, which was meant to be a specific expense for overseas contingency funds. It was meant

to deal with specific wars. Now it has been plussed-up by several millions and millions of dollars to avoid the budget caps.

This isn't a budget debate here. I will be saying more about it on the floor. But I just want to say to my colleagues, think about national security. Yes, we do need a strong national defense and we do need to support our troops and we do need to support our military families. We do need to support our troops. We do need to support our military families. That is what I am going to be elaborating on in a minute. But we also have to look at the other aspects.

First of all, you need a State Department. Part of national security is diplomacy. You need a State Department.

Second, in the State Department, you need Embassy security. If you don't want another Benghazi, you must put money in the Federal budget to make sure we have Embassy security. You have to fund the State Department. That is in discretionary funding.

You do not like the cyber attacks? We are going to have meetings, and we are going to hold hearings, and—hoorah—all of the things we should have been doing 3 to 5 years ago but were stopped on this Senate floor because of concerns of the chamber of commerce that we would overregulate.

We have a Department of Homeland Security. It needs to be funded. It is in discretionary spending.

You want to have a cyber security workforce? Yes. They need to be trained at our great colleges and universities. We need a Department of Education with the Pell Grants and so on to be able to help our people get the jobs for the 21st century so they can do the type of work we are talking about we need them to do here.

I could go through other agencies.

I am not here to stand up for government agencies. I am here to stand up for America. I am here to say: Yes, we do need national security. We need to fund the Department of Defense, but we need to fund those other agencies and programs that are integral to national security. That is why I think we need a new budget agreement along the lines of Ryan-Murray, and we need to end the sequester.

I hope—and I call upon leadership on both sides of the aisle but particularly on the other side of the aisle: Let's get to it now, sooner rather than later.

I am the vice chair of the Appropriations Committee and am working very closely with my esteemed colleague, the senior Senator from Mississippi, on trying to bring bills to the floor, but we simply have to come up with a new agreement.

So we will go through a lot of parliamentary motions and commotion, but I am not so sure we are going to get the locomotion we need to look out for America. We cannot let our military be hollowed out. We cannot let our country be hollowed out. We need

to really move ahead with this new agreement, and a perfect example is why I come to the floor.

All through this debate, I have heard that the most important tool to a strong military is the military themselves, the military and their families. Consistent through all, from both sides of the aisle, is that we must look out for our troops. Well, I could not agree with that more. Yet, what is it that we know in this bill, tucked away, is really an erosion of one of the key earned benefits our military and their families and the retirees have—commissaries. Commissaries.

Commissaries have been around since the 19th century. They have been around since 1826. Military families have been able to shop at networks of stores that provide modestly priced goods—primarily groceries—to military families and to retirees. There are 246 of them, many in our own country, many overseas, many in our country where they are only place our military can go. There are those in some other countries where they are not even looked upon and welcomed in some of these countries, even though we are there.

So what is in this bill? Two things: One, let's privatize the commissaries; the other is, let's cut their budget by \$322 million.

I am for saving money by eliminating Pentagon waste, but I will tell you that no money is wasted at a commissary. In fact, just the opposite happens. The commissaries are the most popular earned benefit the military has.

Also, this is not Senator BARB talking; this is coming from the military themselves. If you listen to the National Military and Veterans Alliance, they say this: Commissary and exchanges are a vital part of pay and compensation. The military community greatly value these benefits. The proposed cuts would dismantle the commissary benefit relied upon by shortening hours and raising prices.

When we look at commissaries, we know that people shop there, they save money, and at the same time they are also a major source of employment.

What I want to do is work with my colleague, the Senator from Oklahoma, a member of the Armed Services Committee, Senator JIM INHOFE. It is his amendment. We want to prevent the commissary privatization pilot program. I also have an additional amendment. I would like to restore the \$322 million in cuts to commissaries. We have an offset to be able to pay for it as well. The benefits of the commissaries are significant. That is why I want these two amendments to be offered. They feed our troops, they help military families stretch their budgets, and they provide jobs to military spouses and to military children old enough to work and military retirees.

The military families tell me they get significant savings—sometimes as much as 30 percent—on their bill. For a

family of four, that could be \$4,500 per year. As I said, 60 percent of the commissary workers are spouses or retirees at these commissaries.

DOD says we want commissaries to be more self-sustaining. They have proposed cuts of more than \$1 billion through 2020. They are talking about, in fiscal year 2016, cutting \$322 million. Next year, they want to cut \$1 billion. And they also want to look at how to privatize.

Joining with my colleague from Oklahoma, the distinguished senior Senator, JIM INHOFE—he has legislation to deal with the privatization. In this bill that is pending, they implement this commissary pilot plan. Well, we have heard that before. I think it is a plane without a pilot. But we do not even know if it is a good option. It was made up by Pentagon bean counters, Pentagon bean slicers who were told: Find savings. So they went after the commissaries.

Well, the Senator from Oklahoma and I want to require the DOD and GAO to study the impact of privatization before a plan can be implemented. In other words, before you privatize, why don't you study the impact? The Senator from Oklahoma is proposing that this study be due in September so that we would be able to act appropriately in our appropriations. I support him in his amendment.

I also am looking for support in the cuts to commissaries. Right now, proposed in both the authorization and then they tried it in our appropriations bill, is a cut in the appropriations by \$322 million. This means hours would be cut, so instead of operating 7 days a week, they would be open 5. It would raise prices in many instances by as much as 25 percent. In far-flung places such as Hawaii or Alaska, prices could even go up by as much as 50 percent because of the formula being used.

This is just not right. Of all of the places that we could save money, let's not go after commissaries. Let's not go after commissaries. They help military families and retirees stretch their budgets. For many of our young military, particularly the enlisted, the commissary is the place where they learn how to stretch their dollar. At the same time, it provides employment to military spouses, in some instances military children, and also to retirees.

What is the problem here? We cannot get votes on our amendments. We cannot get a vote on the privatization issue proposed by the Senator from Oklahoma, and I cannot get a vote on my amendment to restore the \$322 million.

I know the leadership is now meeting on how to wrap up this bill. Well, I don't want to wrap up this bill. I think that what we need to do is to be able to vote on these two amendments.

We have had all kinds of amendments. We had one on the sage-grouse. I know the sage-grouse is a protected species. As an appropriator, I had to deal with this as a rider on the appropriations bills. So I am not against the

sage-grouse. I am not against talking about the sage-grouse. But why, with all of the problems facing America, do we need a sage-grouse amendment on defense when I cannot get a vote on protecting commissaries, protecting an earned benefit of our military, helping them stretch their dollar, and making sure some of them have a chance to work on a military base? Why can't I get an amendment? Why can't the distinguished Senator from Oklahoma get a vote on his amendment that would call for a halt to the privatization pilot until we get a study from GAO on impact? So you can stand up for the sage-grouse, but I will tell you that I am standing up for military families.

I urge the leadership at the highest level and the leadership moving this authorization to give Inhofe-Mikulski privatization of commissaries a vote and give me a chance to offer my amendment. Let the Senate decide. Let's not have me stopped and stymied because of parliamentary procedure.

You might say—and to everybody listening—well, BARBARA, you are pretty outspoken. You are not shy. Why can't you offer your amendment?

Under the rules of the body we are now operating under, I have to get consent. That means all 99 other Senators should not object to me offering an amendment. Well, I am stuck. So what I need is for the leadership to give me the consent to at least have my amendment discussed and debated in the light of day. I want to hear their justification why they have to go after commissaries. Let's stand united. Let's get a new budget agreement. Let me offer our amendment.

We should not be fighting with each other over these things. Instead of going after commissaries, let's go after the bad guys in the world and let's do it in a united way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

3RD ANNIVERSARY OF DACA PROGRAM

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to mark the third anniversary of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, which was this week. Since 2012, the program the President implemented, which has been known as DACA, has offered temporary relief from deportation to immigrants who arrived in the United States as young children. It has helped almost 665,000 young people since June of 2012, including more than 10,000 in Virginia. The DACA Program announced by the President has allowed young people to contribute to our communities, live without constant fear of deportation, keep families together, and provide economic and educational opportunities for these young recipients.

I want to thank President Obama and the administration because DACA has provided relief to thousands of youngsters who seek only to pursue opportunity, provide for their families, and contribute to the only place they have ever known as home—the United States.

Immigrants are not the only ones who benefit. DACA enforces the universal reputation of this country that we are proud of, that we value our immigrant heritage and we embrace and celebrate their contributions to American history, industry, and culture. This is a value which is something we feel very deeply in Virginia. We feel it more every day.

When I was born in 1958, 1 out of 100 Virginians had been born in another country. Today, in 2015, one out of nine Virginians was born in another country. That period coincides with the moving of the Virginia economy from bottom quarter per capita income to top quarter. Immigration and the contributions of immigrants to our State have been tremendously positive.

More than 10,000 youngsters in Virginia have benefited by DACA. We are 13th among all States. Let me just tell you two quick stories.

Hareth Andrade exemplifies what DACA recipients, if given the opportunity, can give back to their communities. Hareth arrived in the United States from Bolivia, brought by adults. She arrived without her parents. She excelled in school. She attended Washington-Lee High School right here in Arlington. She took advanced placement and international baccalaureate classes.

During a campus visit as she graduated, she learned for the first time that her undocumented status would be a barrier to earning a college education. But instead of giving up on her dream, she organized with other students to form DREAMers of Virginia, an organization that has led efforts to provide students access to instate tuition and college admission for kids just like her.

After the President announced the DACA Program in June of 2012, Hareth became a recipient, and she has since transferred from community college to Trinity Washington University, where she expects to graduate with a degree in international affairs next year.

Another student, Jung Bin Cho, also has seen doors open to him because of DACA, doors to educational opportunities such as the fine institution of Virginia Tech, where he now attends. Cho arrived in the United States with his parents from South Korea when he was 7 years old. He attended elementary school and graduated high school in Springfield, VA, where he played on the defensive line for the football team.

His dream—a lot of Virginians have this dream—was attending Virginia Tech, and he gained admission to the school. But at the same time he first realized that his undocumented status eliminated him from instate tuition or any financial aid. Because he couldn't afford it, he attended community college and worked two jobs to support himself. But following DACA and the decision last year to grant instate tuition to young Virginians—a decision for which I applaud our Governor and

general assembly—Cho reapplied to Virginia Tech, won admission, and he now is able to attend Virginia Tech, where he will pursue a degree in business and hopefully participate in this great expansion of the Virginia economy that so many of our immigrants have been proud to lead.

For young people such as Hareth and Cho, DACA makes sense. Both came here as young children. They didn't come here on their open volition; they were brought here. They only know Virginia as home, and they seek to study, work, and build a life in this country. As proud Virginians, they want to return the opportunities afforded to them by using their talents to improve their communities and making it a better place for everybody.

In addition to the humanitarian aspect, as you heard, these talented students are the kinds of people who accelerate our economy. DACA is good for our economy, too. So I strongly support its continuation, but I also wish to encourage my colleagues—and I think we all agree, Democrat, Republican, Independent—we all agree this program is best not by Executive order but by legislation.

We are now almost exactly 2 years from the date when the Senate passed comprehensive immigration reform on this floor in June of 2013. For 2 years, after a strong bipartisan effort, we have waited for action—any action—by the House, not just taking up our bill but doing their own bill and then, in a conference, finding a compromise, which we can do.

It is time that the House act. It is time that the Senate and the House sit down together and do comprehensive immigration reform. We can give DREAMers and millions of other families who continue to live in the shadows an earned pathway to citizenship. It is time to pass that reform. It is in the best traditions of our Nation and in the best value traditions of my Commonwealth that we do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The majority whip.

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, after the Senate concludes its work on the Defense authorization bill tomorrow—a very important part of our responsibility—we will then move to consider the Defense Appropriations Act. This actually is the legislation that will pay the bills for the Department of Defense and make sure our men and women in uniform get the resources they need in order to do their job, not to mention their pay, which is why it is so disturbing to see the leadership of our minority in the Senate announce in the papers here in Washington that they are going to begin what they call a filibuster summer. In other words, they are going to use the power they have as the minority to block important funding bills, beginning with the bill that pays for our national security, in what can only be called a cheap political stunt.

Why they have decided to do that on this important Defense appropriations bill is, frankly, beyond me. I think I understand what their general point is, which is they don't think the Federal Government spends enough money, and so they want to spend more money, and they have no concern whatsoever for the fact that under this administration, we have raised the national debt by trillions of dollars, making sure that my generation will not end up having to pay that money back, but the next generation will unless we meet our responsibilities.

So for them to pull this kind of political stunt and say "You know what, we are not spending enough money, we are not incurring enough debt, and so we are going to force a filibuster on the Defense appropriations bill" in order to extort more spending, more debt, more irresponsibility—the bill our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are pledging to filibuster is not controversial in itself because it would, as I said, provide for our military and would help our troops maintain their status as the greatest military in the world. It also includes simple initiatives that make a lot of sense and serve our troops well, such as giving the men and women who wear the uniform a modest pay raise. Yet the Democratic leader still plans to block this legislation and stymie this Chamber's efforts to fund our troops.

We saw a little glimpse of this last week when Senate Democrats, with the exception of seven, blocked us moving an amendment to deal with cyber security. We saw that their timing could not have been worse because, of course, then it was announced that millions of records at the Office of Personnel Management had been hacked by the Chinese Government and some of the most sensitive security clearance background records were now in their hands—a dramatic act of counterintelligence and espionage.

Then, when we offered an amendment to the Defense authorization bill that would deal with cyber security, would allow more information sharing, would allow lawsuit protection for those who shared information in order to protect the privacy and the information of American citizens, it was blocked by all but seven Democrats on the other side.

So while I have been by and large encouraged by this new Congress and what we have been able to accomplish together in a bipartisan way, I think there are some very troubling signs on the horizon, starting with this ill-considered idea of filibuster summer, throwing a temper tantrum until you can get more money that we don't have to spend on your pet projects. But I think their decision to hold Defense appropriations bill hostage is just inexcusable. This is the essential funding for our military, for national security.

I should point out, as my colleagues across the aisle use this bill as leverage to spend more taxpayer dollars on

things like the IRS, not long ago they vocally opposed the obstructionist tactics they are now employing. Here are the words of the Democratic leader, Senator HARRY REID, in 2013. He said: "It's time to get back to setting fiscal policy through the regular order . . . rather than through hostage taking." I agreed with his comments then, and I wish he would act consistently with those words today.

The American people aren't served well by these kinds of manufactured crises and threats to cut off funding for our troops. And that is why the new Republican Senate, under Majority Leader MCCONNELL, has prioritized and restored the kind of regular order that Senator REID talked about in 2013. Finally, the Congress and the Senate are actually getting back to work on a bipartisan basis.

As I have said, we have had some signs of progress. I know Majority Leader MCCONNELL likes to quote Woody Hayes from Ohio State when he talks about the nature of the progress we have made. He said: "Three yards and a cloud of dust." I like to think of it more as a baseball analogy of singles and an occasional double. But you get the basic point. We are actually beginning to make some progress, and that is why I find so troubling these signs of filibuster summer and this announcement by our Democratic friends.

We have done our best after this last election, after the American people entrusted us with the majority of the House and the Senate, to deliver on our promises. We have held more rollcall votes on amendments in the past 5 months than the minority leader, as the Democratic leader, allowed in the entire year when they were under control—more rollcall votes on amendments in the last 5 months than Democrats allowed in an entire year when they were in control.

The truth is that our Democratic colleagues, I think, like it better, too, because not only was the minority—Republicans—shut out when Senator REID was majority leader, he shut out Members of his own party, the majority party. Now, how you explain that back home, I am not too clear.

But it is not only Senator REID who has made this commitment to restoring regular order and eschewing this idea of hostage taking, which now they are talking about doing.

Here are the comments of one other member of their Senate leadership, the Senator from Washington, Ms. MURRAY. In 2013, she said the American people had no patience for "politicians holding the economy and the Federal Government hostage to extract concessions or score political points."

I agree with her, and I agreed with Senator REID in 2013, but these are the exact same Democratic leaders who are now today threatening the same sort of hostage taking they condemned in 2013.

Well, I like to point out that the legislation we are considering, the Defense appropriations bill, is not a par-

tisan bill. In fact, it was voted out of committee last week by a vote of 27 to 3. This is not a partisan bill, so why they should decide to hold this hostage is beyond me.

All but three Democrats supported the defense spending measure in committee last week. But, unfortunately—and defying logic—some Democrats have publicly admitted to supporting the text of the bill while vowing to do everything they could to keep it from advancing on the floor of the Senate.

Just one example is the junior Senator from Connecticut, who hailed the bill's passage—this is the Defense appropriations bill in committee—through the committee as a "victory for Connecticut"—I am sure there was a press release to go along with that back home—only to go on and say he would go along with the ill-fated strategy to vote no to actually block the bill from being considered on the floor.

The American people are very smart, and they can identify hypocrisy when they see it. When a Senator says, "I am going to vote for the bill in committee, but I am going to vote against it on the floor because that is what my leadership tells me I have to do in order to extract more spending and impose more debt on the American people in future generations," the American people get it once it is pointed out to them.

So this is all about gamesmanship. This is not about responsible legislating, and it is not why the American people sent us here.

I can only hope, being the optimist that I am, that our colleagues on the other side will reconsider this stated strategy of filibuster summer. What a mistake that is. What an unsustainable position when they have to go home over the Fourth of July and tell the veterans, tell the Active-Duty military in their State: Yes, I voted to kill the bill that would pay your salary and provide you the tools you need in order to succeed in your commitment to keeping America safe.

I just don't know how you sustain that position.

So I would encourage our colleagues from across the aisle to remember that filibuster summer is a bad idea and that it is not good for the American people. It irresponsibly signals to our troops that some Members of the Senate are not fully behind them.

So let's continue to working productively. We have done it on hard pieces of legislation, most recently on the trade legislation we passed out of the Senate with a strong bipartisan vote. Let's continue to work together productively in a way that serves the American people and not resort to the sort of political maneuvers that I don't think reflect well on us and on the Senate as an institution but, more fundamentally, undermine the men and women who wear the uniform of the U.S. military.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF DACA PROGRAM

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise to acknowledge the third anniversary of the Deferred Action For Childhood Arrivals—the DACA Program—as many of my colleagues have over the past few days.

The DACA Program was created because our government faced an impractical mandate to deport hundreds of thousands of undocumented children who pose no risk to society. Congress, thus far, has been unable to solve the problem. Despite the very good bipartisan efforts that occurred in this body back in 2013, we have been unable to pass any meaningful immigration reform. Why? Well, a group from the far right in the House of Representatives oppose immigration reform at all costs and have sort of tied Speaker BOEHNER into knots so he can't bring anything to the floor.

So 3 years ago, with no choice, President Obama moved forward on his own to shield children who were brought to this country through no fault of their own. They were brought by their parents when they were very young, most of them; children who have lived here for many years and know no other country as their own, children who are in our school system and dreaming of getting a college degree in America.

The President created DACA, a temporary program modeled on the DREAM Act, which is a vital component of comprehensive immigration reform. As I said, we couldn't get immigration reform, unfortunately. That would have been the best way to go, and I am still hopeful that will happen at some point in time. But doing what the President did was the humane and practical thing to do because the House couldn't do anything. What choice was there? Leave these kids here through no fault of their own in total limbo? That was not the right thing to do. So we hope this is a policy Congress will implement into law at some point, but right now, of course, as I mentioned, the House is hog-tied.

In the 3 short years since its inception, the DACA Program has deferred deportations for over one-half million young DREAMers. In New York, nearly 34,000 have been approved for DACA. Of those 34,000, there is a girl named Kirssy Martinez from New York City. Kirssy came to our country from the Dominican Republic in 2002, and she attended high school in New York City.

After graduating, Kirssy lived in the shadows, working small jobs here and there as a waitress, a babysitter, whatever she could do to make ends meet. She was a good student coming out of high school. She even had a few schol-

arship offers but couldn't attend college because she didn't have a green card and, moreover, she didn't have the means to afford a college education.

In 2012, Kirssy was one of the first to sign up for DACA. With her new temporary legal status, she was able to enroll in Bronx Community College. She got loans to pay for her first semester. She had to drop out once the loans ran out. She scraped together more funding from TheDream.US scholarship that provides tuition assistance to DREAMers at CUNY schools.

Now Kirssy is 26 years old. I met her at her graduation at Bronx Community College. She was coaledictorian of her class with a perfect 4.0 average.

These are the kinds of kids we are talking about. They want to be Americans. They want to get out of the shadows. They want to live productive, full lives. They do not want a handout. They want to be able to be on their own. That is what Kirssy did. I met her, and I was so proud of her.

Kirssy has realized a DREAMers dream because of both her hard work and the President's DACA Program, which helped bring her out of the shadows. There are many more in New York and around the country just like her.

The sad truth is that instead of harnessing the potential and the contributions these young people could make, instead of welcoming them as full-fledged members of our society, the Republican majority in the House of Representatives voted to repeal the DACA Program. With these votes, House Republicans have made it clear they want to deport these DREAMers.

Many of the DREAMers have a sibling who may have been born in the United States and is a citizen of the United States or a parent who may have a green card. House Republicans have no qualms about tearing these families apart. They have no qualms what it could cost us as a nation to lose these young people.

If you look at the workforce in America, it is different than Europe in that we do have enough young people who want to work to help support those who are in retirement or on disability—but not if our House Republicans have their way.

In my home State of New York, DREAMers like Kirssy are doing amazing things. They are studying medicine, they are working at startup tech companies and more. If Republicans in the House have their way, these talented people would be putting their skills to use to compete against us rather than working to make America stronger.

Like the millions who came here before them—like the ancestors of our Presiding Officer and my ancestors—they came here because they want to be Americans, not because they want to get a benefit, not because they want to be a leach on society. They want to be a full-fledged, productive member of society. Somehow these folks in the House—and I don't even know if they

know who these kids are—want to stop that from happening.

As we recognize this anniversary, we should remember the real human stories behind the DACA Program and think how our Nation could be made better by sensible immigration reform now.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

NATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S AND BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing June as National Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. Every 67 seconds someone in our country develops Alzheimer's disease. It is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. Yet it is the only disease in the top 10 that cannot yet be prevented, cured or slowed.

Of the 5.3 million Americans with Alzheimer's disease, 5.1 million are 65 and older, accounting for 96 percent of the diagnosed population. By 2050, the number of people 65 and older with Alzheimer's disease may nearly triple from 5.1 million to an estimated 13.8 million Americans. The disease will take the lives of an estimated 700,000 seniors in the United States this year, and that number is rapidly rising.

While deaths from other major causes have decreased in this country, deaths from Alzheimer's disease have increased significantly. Between 2000 and 2013, deaths attributed to Alzheimer's disease increased 71 percent, while deaths attributed to heart disease, the No. 1 cause of death in the United States, decreased by 14 percent.

This devastating disease is also one of our country's most expensive diseases. Nearly one in every five Medicare dollars is spent on people with Alzheimer's and other dementias. Unless something is done, by 2050 it will be \$1 out of every \$3. We cannot afford to overlook Alzheimer's disease. Both the human cost and the cost to our health care system are simply too great. We must invest more in research to develop treatments to prevent or delay the progression of Alzheimer's disease and ultimately to find a cure.

Of all the statistics and data regarding Alzheimer's disease, perhaps the most upsetting is the immense gap between the amount we spend on Alzheimer's research and the cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's disease.

In 2014, the total cost of Alzheimer's was \$214 billion, including \$150 billion to Medicare and Medicaid. During that same year, the National Institutes of Health invested only one-quarter of 1 percent of that amount—\$566 million—in Alzheimer's research. This year, cancer research will be allocated an estimated \$5.4 billion in Federal funds and heart disease will get \$1.2 billion,

while Alzheimer's and other dementias will receive a fraction of that, at \$586 million. Simply put, it is imperative we provide NIH with robust and sustained funding, which will allow it to support Alzheimer's research that is so desperately needed.

Let me make it clear. I strongly support the research dollars going into cancer and would like to see more funds put into it. I strongly support the amount of funds we are putting into heart disease and would like to see more funds put in. I know there is bipartisan support in this Congress to increase the pie that NIH has—the funds NIH has—because we understand it advances the humanitarian need in our country to find the answers to cures for diseases but also creates good jobs. We need to dramatically increase the amount of resources that we make available for Alzheimer's research.

We must also support innovative, evidence-based models to address the needs of those currently living with Alzheimer's disease and their family caregivers. I am proud to tell you about the Maximizing Independence at Home—or MIND at Home Program—developed at Johns Hopkins in my home State of Maryland.

In the MIND at Home Program, an interdisciplinary team provides home-based assessments, care coordination and support to individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, allowing them to remain in their homes longer, improving their quality of life, and supporting their family caregivers.

During an 18-month pilot project, the MIND at Home Program helped participants stay safely in their homes for an average of 9½ months longer than would have been otherwise possible, while also improving their quality of life.

We have an opportunity to improve the lives of millions of Americans suffering from Alzheimer's, and the lives of their family members, by building on the success of programs such as MIND at Home. This June, in honor of National Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, let us pledge to provide robust, sustained funding for NIH, so it can support much needed research on this devastating disease, and let us pledge to support innovative programs such as MIND at Home to improve the quality of life of those currently living with Alzheimer's and their family caregivers.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, today is my 103rd time coming to the floor to ask my colleagues to wake up to the urgent problem of climate change.

Pretty much everyone is telling us climate change is a problem. First of all, there are the scientists, virtually every major scientific society and agency. Then there are our military and national security leaders, leading American companies, doctors, and faith leaders who are all telling us this is a problem and asking us to wake up.

The American people understand climate change is real. Nearly 80 percent think that doing nothing to reduce future warming will cause a very serious or somewhat serious problem for the United States. Two-thirds of Americans, including half of Republicans, favor government action to reduce global warming, and two-thirds, including half of Republicans, would be more likely to vote for a candidate who campaigns on fighting climate change.

I have visited with voters in early primary States, with people in Iowa, in New Hampshire, and in South Carolina—business owners, teachers, community leaders, and elected officials. There will be no avoiding this issue in the 2016 election.

So we might expect Republican Presidential hopefuls to present to the voters their plans for climate action. We might expect the Republican candidates to address this problem in an honest and straightforward manner. But we would be wrong.

Republican Presidential candidates who venerate our military turn deaf when that military warns of climate change's national security dangers. Republican Presidential candidates who are conspicuously religious ignore Pope Francis and other religious leaders when they warn of the fundamental indecency of not addressing climate change. Republican Presidential candidates who seek to represent our corporate elite ignore those corporations' own business case for addressing climate change. And Republican candidates who root boisterously for their home State university sport teams ignore the climate change warnings of scientists and researchers at those very same universities. The Republican Presidential primary is a festival of climate denial, with candidates competing to tie themselves in knots to avoid acknowledging carbon pollution.

A few even subscribe to the big hoax theory. One candidate wrote in his book that climate science is based on "doctored data" and that "it's all one contrived phony mess that is falling apart under its own weight." Another even claims to know who is behind the hoax. He said: "The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing noncompetitive." Wow, he got to the bottom of that. "This very expensive global warming"—I will delete the word since this is the Senate floor—"has got to stop. Our planet is freezing," the same candidate wrote last winter.

Then there is the "who knows" caucus. One Republican hopeful seems to think we don't really know one way or

the other. "We may be warming, we may be cooling," he says. Another has said that people who are concerned about climate change "don't like to look at the actual facts and data." Now there is a really perverse piece of rhetoric, because what do the actual facts and data show? The data show that the amount of carbon in the Earth's atmosphere has risen dramatically, since the onset of the industrial revolution just over a century ago, to the highest levels mankind has ever experienced and the highest levels Earth has experienced in at least 800,000 years. It is a fact of basic science that carbon dioxide traps heat and alters the climate. That has been known since the days of President Abraham Lincoln. The data match and show decades of increase in global temperature. The scientists we pay to know these things say that warming of the climate is "unequivocal." The ocean is warming. Sea levels are rising. Ocean water is growing more acidic. We measure all of that. It is not theory. Those are the facts.

At least two candidates, by the way, have compared those who accept the established science of climate change to people who believe the Earth is flat. That is particularly rich when we consider that NASA scientists are among the strongest and most articulate proponents of the science of climate change. Do we really think that NASA scientists believe the world is flat? Do we think the scientists who launched a rover through space, landed it safely on the surface of Mars, and are now driving it around are confused about the circular nature of the Earth?

Then there is the "always changing" crowd. One Republican Presidential hopeful says:

[T]he climate is changing. I don't think the science is clear on what percentage is manmade. . . . And for the people to say the science is decided on this is just really arrogant.

Actually, it is just really factual. "[T]here's never been a moment where the climate is not changing," another candidate observed. "The question is: What percent of that is . . . due to human activity?"

Well, the links of climate change to human activity are something that scientists have studied extraordinarily closely. According to the leading scientific body on climate change, the best estimate is that pretty much all of the recent rise was due to human activity. The lead scientific organization says greenhouse gas emissions, along with human activity, "are extremely likely to have been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century." And, by the way, "extremely likely" is defined in that document as 95 to 100 percent certainty.

So this gaggle of Republican Presidential hopefuls is willing to take the "worse than 1 in 20" bet that human activity is not the dominant cause of recent climate change. Or, as another Republican candidate put it, "the conclusions you make from that are not conclusive"—whatever that means.

Then, of course, there is this: "I'm not a scientist." At least three of the declared Republican candidates have used that line. Imagine if Congress answered other policy questions that way. What is your position on abortion? Oh, I am not a gynecologist. What should we do about health care? Oh, I am not a medical doctor.

We are not expected to be experts. We are expected to listen to the experts and to make conscientious, informed, and prudent decisions—and, oh, are we failing that test.

There are even Republican candidates for President who in this American century would abdicate American leadership on the climate crisis. "Is there anything the United States can do about it?" one of the Republican candidates asked. "Clearly, no"—reducing greenhouse gas emissions "will have zero impact," he said, on climate change. Another candidate said: "A single nation acting alone can make no difference at all." I would love to hear Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt conversing about whether America can make a difference.

Last week the senior Senator from Oklahoma, whose skepticism about climate change is well documented, was the keynote speaker at the climate denial conference of a creepy outfit called the Heartland Institute. Here is what he told them—and by the way, when I say "creepy," they are the group that put up a billboard comparing climate scientists to the Unabomber—pretty responsible stuff. "If you look at the Republican candidates," he assured the attendees at that forum, "they're all denying this stuff, with the exception of LINDSEY GRAHAM. . . . They're all with the people in this room"—quite a room to want to be with.

I am glad that our colleague from South Carolina, Senator GRAHAM, has called for reducing carbon pollution with smart probusiness policies. He has lit a path for other Republican colleagues to follow, and he is not the only one on this path. Prominent conservative thinkers and former administration officials from Nixon, Reagan, and both Bush administrations have voiced support for putting a fee on carbon emissions. Prominent conservatives and libertarians think that we can put a price on carbon, relieve taxes on profits and work, and come out economically for the better. Even setting aside the environmental and climate benefit, just economically, that is a win.

So I offered a carbon fee bill last week with our colleague Senator SCHATZ, what one conservative called an "olive limb"—doing better than just an olive branch—to conservatives who are ready to address this problem.

So LINDSEY GRAHAM has articulated one path. There is a different, darker path. It is the path of obedience to fossil fuel interests. The fossil fuel companies, their super PAC allies, and their front groups swing a heavy financial

club, and they want to herd Republican candidates down the darker path. Americans for Prosperity, part of the Koch brothers-backed political machine, plans on spending \$900 million in the 2016 election cycle—\$900 million. Its president, Tim Phillips, threatened publicly that any Republican candidate in the 2016 Presidential campaign who supported climate action "would be at a severe disadvantage in the Republican nomination process." Gee, what might candidates conclude from that? And that is just one part of the fossil fuel political machine.

So I ask myself: Why are there all of those preposterous statements by the Republican Presidential candidates? The only conclusion I can reach is to signal that very obedience. We are now at the stage in the Republican Presidential primary where candidates caper and grovel before the fossil fuel industry's political machine, hoping they will be the chosen beneficiaries of fossil fuel election spending. Remember that there is \$900 million from just one group. It looks like that earns the industry a lot of groveling and capering.

Eventually, the Republican Party is going to have to find its true voice on climate change. It can't continue indefinitely as the political arm of the fossil fuel industry in an environment in which 80 percent of Americans want climate action and a majority of young Republicans think that climate denial is ignorant, out of touch or crazy, according to the words they selected in the poll. Ultimately, the Republican Party is going to have to find its true voice. Until then, America is presented the unseemly spectacle of Republican Presidential candidates fighting to have the best position on climate change that money can buy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor again to speak about Iran as we count down to the deadline for an agreement about Iran's illusive-ness when it comes to the military dimensions of their program and how they respond to that in any agreement. The truth, as it has always been, is illusive, and it remains so.

Yesterday, Secretary of State Kerry said—in response to a question about whether Iran's atomic work by the Iranian military would have to be resolved before sanctions would be lifted—that we are not fixated on Iran specifically accounting for what they did at one point or another. What we are concerned about is going forward.

Given Iran's history of deception, I am very concerned about what they did "at one point or another."

In an Iran task force memo on verification, it says that "until Iran provides a full accounting of its past and present possible military dimension activities, the international community cannot have confidence that it knows either how far Iran is along the path to nuclear weapons or that Iran's nuclear weapons activities have effectively ceased."

David Albright—who has appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and whom I called many times when I was the chairman and still do—is the founder of the Institute for Science and International Security. Mr. Albright said the Secretary's remarks were "very worrisome." He said that they reflect what he sees as the administration's long practice of offering concessions to Iran. He said: "Whenever confronted with Iranian intransigence. . . . It's going to be hard for a lot of people to support this deal if they give in on past military dimensions."

He also said:

Addressing the International Atomic Energy Administration's concerns about the military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programs is fundamental to any long-term agreement. . . . An agreement that sidesteps the military issues would risk being unverifiable. Moreover, the world would not be so concerned if Iran had never conducted weaponization activities aimed at building a nuclear weapon.

Speaking of the possible military dimensions of Iran's program, the former Deputy Director General of the International Atomic Energy Administration, Olli Heinonen, said:

Without addressing those questions . . . the IAEA Secretariat will not be able to come to a conclusion that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful use, which is essential in building confidence of the international community over Iran's nuclear program. A comprehensive deal—that would include uranium enrichment—can only be reached if uncertainties over Iran's military nuclear capability are credibly addressed. . . . That should be an unambiguous condition to achieving a final accord that is meaningful in safeguards terms.

Now, this is the former Deputy Director General of the International Atomic Energy Administration, whom we hear overwhelmingly under the proposed agreements saying this is the entity that will be responsible for the verification of any potential agreement.

Well, his experience says that without understanding the weaponization elements of Iran's program, you can't fully be able to do that. He also warned that outsiders really can have no idea where and how fast the mullahs could build a nuclear weapon unless they know what Iranian engineers have done in the past.

As to Secretary Kerry's assertion yesterday that we know what their program was—and he said it, as I read it, almost as unequivocal that we know what their program was. Well, I get

concerned when I read the former Director of the CIA, Gen. Michael Hayden, who has said not addressing the possible military dimensions “creates an increased burden on verification if I don’t have high confidence in where the Iranians actually are, not such as fissile material development, but in their weaponization program. . . . we do have intelligence estimates, but they remain estimates.”

They remain estimates.

[F]or a country that says “that’s not our objective,” they refuse to come clean on their past. . . . How can we know their intent, how can we know their capacity for breakout or sneak out, without high confidence in where it is they are right now?

He also said in reference to Secretary Kerry’s remarks:

I’d like to see the DNI or any intelligence office repeat that word for me. They won’t. What he is saying is that we don’t care how far they’ve gotten with weaponization. We’re betting the farm on our ability to limit the production of fissile material. He’s pretending we have perfect knowledge about something that was an incredibly tough intelligence target while I was director and I see nothing that has made it any easier.

This is the former Director of the CIA, supposedly where we have all of this knowledge. This is his expression of what we have or don’t have. Clearly, basically what he is saying is we have estimates, but they are just that, estimates.

I am very concerned when the Secretary of State says that we are prepared to ease sanctions on Iran without fully understanding how far Iran progressed on its secret nuclear weapons program. It has been a fundamental question from the very beginning of these negotiations. It was made very clear in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and other venues where Members asked about would Iran have to come clean on its possible dimensions of its militarization of its weapons program and would that have to be upfront. That was always an understanding, almost like a red line. Now that seems to be erased.

It has been a fundamental question to which we need—not just want—a full and verifiable answer. This is not just about Iran making some admission. That is beyond. I think the world has acted the way it has acted with the sanctions from the U.N. Security Council and elsewhere because it knows Iran was pursuing weaponization of its nuclear program. It is just that we don’t know how far they got in that process, and how far they got in that process is important to know as we are determining the other elements of any agreement, particularly with breakout. That has been the case as long as I have been working to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state.

Now, the Secretary of State says we are prepared to ease economic sanctions without a full and comprehensive answer to that question. He says Iran’s past suspected nuclear activities need

to be “addressed.” That is all, simply addressed—not specifically answered but only addressed. According to the New York Times article that I read, he made it clear that sanctions could be lifted—they could be lifted—before definitively resolving concerns of the International Atomic Energy Agency about Iran’s past nuclear research and the extent of the military dimensions of that research.

That is simply unacceptable, in my view, and it should be unacceptable to everyone in this Chamber.

You know, the New York Times article goes on to say:

Those favoring full disclosure of what diplomats have delicately called the “possible military dimensions” of Iranian nuclear research say that the West will never know how long it would take Iran to manufacture a weapon—if it ever developed or obtained bomb-grade uranium or plutonium—unless there is a full picture of its success in suspected experiments to design the detonation systems for a weapon and learn how to shrink it to fit atop a missile.

That is exactly what I believe, and I came to the floor recently and had a map that described where the possible reach of Iran’s present missile technology exists, and it is most of the gulf, into parts of Eastern Europe, Turkey, Egypt, and of course our ally, the State of Israel. So its reach today, under missile capacity—and something they continue to perfect—is incredibly significant.

For a decade since obtaining data from an Iranian scientist from a laptop that was spirited out of the country, the CIA and Israel have devoted enormous energy to understanding the scope and success of the program.

Failing to require disclosure, they argue, would also undercut the atomic agency—a quiet signal to other countries that they, too, could be given a pass.

That is quoted from the Times article. Those are exactly my continuing concerns, and I think they are concerns of a very large universe of people who have been following these developments. I need to know the answer to those questions before I can support any lifting of sanctions against Iran that I have fought for, authored, and that this Senate has unanimously supported.

So I am going to conclude, but I will be back to point out the unfolding problems with dealing with the mullahs in Tehran and what it means to the national security of the United States and to our allies in the Middle East and to the stability of the region and to what I am increasingly concerned is the moving of goal posts that move increasingly in the direction of Iran.

I remember when we started off this conversation—these negotiations—Iraq’s plutonium reactor, we were told they will dismantle it or we will destroy it. Well, this agreement allows Iraq to continue—reconfigured somewhat, but it can be reconfigured back. The President himself has said there was no need for Fordow, built deeply

under a mountain, an enrichment facility.

Now, if you want a peaceful nuclear civilian program, you don’t go deep into a mountain to ultimately do enrichment, but that is what the Iranians did. The President himself said that was an unnecessary facility. We were told it was going to be closed. Well, it is going to stay open—reconfigured to produce less uranium and supposedly with safeguards, but it is going to stay open. The point is, with regard to the weaponization elements, Iran has for a decade—a decade—worked against the U.N. Security Council resolution that said it had to come clean on this question. So for a decade they haven’t done it.

When you have the leverage, why wouldn’t you seek to achieve it now, so you know and can calculate the rest of your agreement? That, too, seems to be lost in the shifting sands of these negotiations. This is of deep concern to me, and I can only hope we will end up at a better deal than that which is being unfolded as we speak.

Every time I listen to another element of what I thought was a critical element of any deal, that critical element seems to be oddly moving in the direction of what Iran wants it to be and not what we in the international community should want to see. That is my concern, and I will continue to come to the floor to report on it.

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. SCHATZ. 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. SCHATZ. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, the facts are undeniable. Climate change is real. It is caused by humans. It is happening now and it is solvable.

One solution to climate change is putting a fair price on carbon pollution. Last week, Senator WHITEHOUSE and I introduced a bill, S. 1548, to do just that and to return all of the revenue to American families and businesses.

I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his leadership on this bill, but we want a Republican dance partner. We want conservative leadership on this great challenge of our time.

Climate change increases the severity and frequency of storms and natural disasters. This is not only a humanitarian problem but also an economic issue. A heat wave in Texas in 2011, for example, caused \$5 billion in livestock and crop losses. Climate change makes events like this 20 times more likely to occur today than in the

1960s. Climate change's impact on the economy is particularly damaging because it creates so much uncertainty.

There is a role for the government here. The administration is doing everything it can to reduce carbon pollution within the statutory constraints of the Clean Air Act, but it will not get us to the reductions we need. Congress needs to step in and legislate to get the reductions we need to make sure we are protecting low-income and working families and growing our economy.

Regulations like the Clean Power Plan and market mechanisms such as a price on carbon are not mutually exclusive; in fact, they work together. They are mutually reinforcing. If powerplants reduce emissions under the Clean Power Plan, they will pay less in carbon fees. Market mechanisms for reducing pollution work.

In the 1990s, President George H.W. Bush used cap and trade to reduce emissions from sulfur dioxide in order to combat acid rain. The program was successful in slashing emissions, which not only meant healthier lakes and waterways but healthier communities. The health benefits for humans linked to lower sulfur dioxide emissions were estimated at \$50 billion annually by 2010.

Mrs. BOXER. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. SCHATZ. Yes, I will be pleased to yield to the Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank the Senator, and I welcome his remarks. We are in a space in the Senate where there are some people who still say climate change isn't happening, even though, as the Senator and I know, 98, 99 percent of the scientists in this country say it is obvious.

I am also so pleased my friend is here today because he is talking about cap and trade, and that leads us into my question. I will ask two questions.

One question I have for the Senator from Hawaii is how he feels about the Pope and the encyclical, where the Pope is basically stating it the way it is, and it needs to be heard by everyone. I wonder how my friend responded to that. Also, I wanted to make sure my friend knew in California we have a cap-and-trade program, and I thought it was so good that you reminded people that this was a creation by a Republican President dealing with acid rain and it was so successful and the public health benefits so outweighed the costs.

So I wanted to make sure my friend was aware we had this cap-and-trade system in California that is working well. We balanced our budget in large part because of this, and businesses like it. They liked the certainty of it. Also, will the Senator respond to the issue of the Pope entering into this debate.

Mr. SCHATZ. I thank the Senator from California.

Through the Chair, I will answer the first question.

First, when it comes to the Pope's encyclical, it seems to me that he is

displaying the moral leadership that is going to be necessary in all sectors—in the private sector, in the public sector, among Democrats, Republicans, Independents. People across the planet are starting to understand the magnitude of the climate challenge.

One of the reasons I have been coming to the floor so frequently is not to lambaste the other party, but rather to encourage that there be conservative leadership in this space. There is certainly progressive leadership in this space. There is increasingly corporate leadership. There is leadership in the Department of Defense, in the scientific community. But what we really need is for conservatives to step up and to acknowledge the reality of this problem and propose their own set of solutions.

They may disagree with a carbon fee or a cap-and-trade program or the President's Clean Power Plan. But let's have that debate out in the open. Come down and beat up on our bill or beat up on the President's proposal. That is fine. But we need to have this great debate in this great Chamber because this is one of the greatest challenges of our time.

To the Senator's second question, talking a little bit about how cap and trade has worked in California but also how market-based mechanisms have worked all over North America and across the planet, the Senator is right. There is a cap-and-trade program in California, and the economy has continued to improve. The State's fiscal situation has continued to improve.

We have the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative. We have tripled clean energy in a very short period of time, all while unemployment has gone down. In 2008, British Columbia became the first and only jurisdiction in North America with an economy-wide price on carbon emissions. Seven years later, evidence shows that even going it alone, British Columbia was able to reduce petroleum consumption more than the rest of Canada and without any negative impact on growth.

So the Senator from California is right. We can do this and grow our economy. But we are going to need bipartisan leadership. Market mechanisms are one of the most straightforward solutions to climate change. They have growing support across the ideological spectrum. The carbon fee in our bill is predictable. It can start right away. There is no new government program to administer or to run and no need for complex financial transactions or trading.

It is simple and relatively easy to administer, and it gets the reductions that we need: an estimated 40 percent of greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2030. The bill, importantly, is revenue neutral. The original carbon fee legislation poured back the new revenue into a bunch of goodies that I liked in terms of dealing with the challenge of climate change. But we understand that if we are going to get Re-

publican support, this needs to be revenue neutral or close to it, and we need to use the revenue to ameliorate the challenges that are going to occur as we transition into a clean energy economy.

It also lowers corporate tax rates, which will make our Tax Code more competitive with other countries. But reducing carbon emissions and growing our economy ought to go hand in hand. This bill lays out a clear framework for how to accomplish that. Climate change demands leadership from both progressives and conservatives. A price on carbon is a market-based solution that can appeal to people of multiple ideologies but share a common goal of solving one of the great challenges of our time.

In the tradition of Margaret Thatcher and Barry Goldwater, we need conservatives to embrace their own market-based solutions to our climate challenge. There is nothing conservative about ignoring the collective knowledge of the scientific establishment. There is nothing conservative about ignoring the warnings from our Department of Defense. There is nothing conservative about shirking our responsibility for global leadership. There is nothing conservative about conducting a dangerous experiment on the only planet that we have.

So we have no desire for this to continue to be an issue where only one party is on the floor talking about it. Let's have the argument about what the right solution set ought to be. But let's have it out in the open, and let's have it together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

EPA WATER RULE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, the EPA recently released its final water rule, claiming much greater power for the administration to oversee the land use decisions of homeowners, small businesses, and family farms throughout our country. This mandate is full of problems, and the American people are being sold a false bill of goods.

Just look at the potential impact to my home State of Arkansas. As you can see, the entire State will come under this jurisdiction. The red on this map, compiled by Agriculture's Waters of the United States Mapping Initiative, highlights the extent to which this EPA rule would impact Arkansas. As you can see, the Obama administration wants to give bureaucrats in Washington control of almost all of the water in Arkansas. They are deceiving the American people in order to justify this power grab. First, they imply that unless Washington is in control, water is simply not protected.

This is not true. Clean water protection involves our local communities. Private land owners, conservation districts, States, and local communities protect non-Federal waters all of the time. Second, the Agency claims this rule is designed to protect drinking water.

Again, this is an attempt to scare the American people. It is dishonest.

We all want to protect our water resources, and clean drinking water is certainly a priority. I support the Safe Drinking Water Act. For more than 40 years the Safe Drinking Water Act has encouraged Federal-State cooperation in improving safe drinking water. That work has made tremendous progress, which we can all be proud of. This law has been strongly supported by both Republicans and Democrats. It has been reauthorized and extended by Republican-controlled Congresses, and it will continue to improve safe drinking water whether or not this Federal power grab continues.

This administration says one thing about safe drinking water, and then it does another. For example, in 2013 and 2014, the Obama administration cut funding for the Safe Drinking Water Grant Program. This program, which is a Federal-State partnership, does far more to protect safe drinking water than anything in the EPA's new power grab.

Third, we hear rhetoric about rivers catching on fire and toxic pollution. Once again, this is an attempt to scare the American people. Major rivers will continue to receive Federal and State protection just as they have for decades. Isolated non-navigable waters will continue to be protected by State and local efforts as they are now. Let's not forget that farmers and landowners care about clean water.

Northeast Arkansas farmer Joe Christian told the Jonesboro Sun after the EPA finalized the rule: I am not going to do something detrimental to the land I work and live on.

There is no greater environmentalist than a farmer. For the past year, Arkansas farmers and ranchers have shared with me their concerns over this EPA overreach. I want to share some of the comments that I recently received. Fred in Trumann wrote:

Like every other person in America, I favor clean water. However, there appears to be a grab for power or control related to water. I fail to see how a low spot in a field or yard or ditch that I create on my own land should be included. We are being over-regulated by Washington—please continue to limit intrusion into our lives where none is needed.

Rodney in Lonsdale sent me an email saying:

The EPA doesn't need to be monitoring my pond and streams, telling me what to do or how to use them. This is an overreach.

These frustrations are the result of an agency that often abuses its authority, creating unnecessary and costly mandates. It is not just Arkansans. Across the country, people are sounding the alarm on this power grab.

"Extreme" and "unlawful" are two words the American Farm Bureau used to describe the rule. An analysis of the finalized rule by the organization determined that the ambiguity of the rule will give the Agency "broad discretion to identify waters and to limit

the scope of most of the exclusions." The good news is that we have a bipartisan agreement that this EPA rule is a problem.

After EPA finalized this rule, the Wall Street Journal published an editorial calling this rule by EPA an "ambitious attack" and urged Congress to overturn the rule and force "Members to show whose side they're on—the average landowners or the Washington water police."

That is why I joined the Senate's efforts to protect property owners and keep Washington's hands off of private lands. The Federal Water Quality Protection Act safeguards Americans from this overreach. It sends EPA back to the drawing board to craft a proposal that encourages true cooperation. It will keep the hands of Washington's politicians out of the decisions that have been made in the States and local communities for generations.

Under this modest, bipartisan legislation, the EPA will be able to protect Federal waters without expanding its power. I appreciate Senator BARRASSO, the bill's author, for his continued leadership in holding EPA accountable. Last week, my colleagues and I who serve on the Environment and Public Works Committee moved this legislation forward. This is a step in the right direction to protecting the rights of landowners while protecting our Nation's waters.

I look forward to supporting this commonsense legislation on the Senate floor and encouraging my colleagues to do the same. Congress must build on the progress that we have made toward better water quality. We can do this best by protecting the role of States, local communities, and private citizens to be a part of the process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss a bill I will be introducing, the Transition to Independence Act.

The bill is a Medicaid demonstration program that will give incentives to States to achieve more integrated employment for people with disabilities.

The Federal Government funds a hodge podge of programs that provide supports for people with disabilities.

However, the largest of all programs providing supports for people with disabilities, the Medicaid program, could do much more to drive better outcomes.

The Medicaid program provides critical supports for people with disabilities including primary health care and home and community-based care.

This bill is unique in that it uses the resources of the Medicaid program to drive better outcomes for people with disabilities.

Our public policy encourages people with disabilities to participate in society, to live in the community and to have integrated employment.

But what does the government do to encourage that outcome?

What does government do to insure that all people with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve their maximum participation?

I would argue, not enough.

The program that is the largest funder of supports for people with disabilities is Medicaid.

Unfortunately, Medicaid funding to States is in no way tied to producing better outcomes.

Now I know we cannot just snap our fingers and make it so.

The Federal Government cannot just order the States to do better.

The Federal Government needs to provide States the right incentives to achieve better outcomes.

That is the goal of the Transition to Independence Act.

This bill creates a 5-year, 10-State Medicaid demonstration program.

States participating in the demonstration program will receive Medicaid bonus payments for meeting achievement targets for individual integrated employment.

Simply stated, as States move people with disabilities to integrated settings, they get more money.

States can also achieve additional funding for agreeing to give up new congregate placements.

States can achieve additional funding for ending vocation rehabilitation for congregate settings.

States can achieve additional funding for taking actions that will grow the workforce serving people with disabilities.

Finally, States can achieve additional funding for taking steps to improve interagency collaboration.

Too much of disability policy occurs in isolated silos where people in charge of policy don't talk to each other.

There is health services, long-term supports, housing, education and workforce training, and transportation available to people with disabilities all run by people who aren't working together to maximize the outcome for the individual.

Now it is legitimate to ask: why can't States take these policy steps today?

They can take some actions of course.

But they have a significant financial incentive not to take these actions.

It will take a significant investment of resources for a State to achieve better outcomes for people with disabilities.

If a State wants to improve outcomes, it needs to invest in providing the supports necessary to help people with disabilities participate more fully in the community.

In the end, moving people with disabilities from more expensive congregate settings to more self-sufficient, integrated settings is better for the individual and ultimately better for the taxpayer because it will require less intensive, less expensive supports.

But under Medicaid, when a State makes that investment, it has to give

half or more of the savings achieved back to the Federal Government.

Again, that is a serious disincentive for the States.

Basically, the bonuses I am proposing in this bill allow the States to keep the savings they achieve.

It is my intention that this bill be essentially budget neutral to the Federal taxpayer while giving States a real incentive to achieve better outcomes.

We can build better supports for people with disabilities.

The term often used is a “lifespan benefit.”

I believe that creation of a lifespan benefit, where people with disabilities receive coordinated, multidisciplinary support to achieve the maximum functional outcomes possible begins with the Medicaid program.

It is my intention to prove that through this demonstration bill.

I have talked to scores of people with disabilities and their families and they want to work a real job that pays a fair wage.

Agencies that provide these services are committed to helping them find real jobs.

It is time to change Medicaid incentives to encourage and reward that.

Last week, a constituent of mine from Dubuque, Rose Carroll, visited my office with the Autistic Self Advocacy Network.

Rose is currently in college working on a degree in math.

All Rose wants is to know that she will have the supports available to her when she needs them so that she can do all she can to participate in her community.

That is exactly what this bill intends to do.

It will demonstrate that States, when given the right incentives, will do all they can to make sure Rose has those supports.

Back home, my friend Chris Sparks is the Executive Director of Exceptional Persons Incorporated in Waterloo, IA.

Chris and his staff go out into the community every day to provide direct support services for people with disabilities.

These workers provide a necessary service in order to assist people with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities to have jobs in their community.

But it is a struggle every day for Chris to find workers, to train them and retain them.

This bill will provide States the incentives to grow the workforce to make it easier for people like Chris Sparks to go out and provide services that allow individuals with disabilities to achieve independence.

The bill I introduce today has the support of the American Association of People with Disabilities, the American Association on Health and Disability, Autism Speaks, the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the National Adult Day

Services Association, the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services, the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, and the National Down Syndrome Congress.

The bill also has the support of the American Network of Community Options and Resources including Iowa members: Christian Opportunity Center, Hope Haven, Opportunity Village, Hills & Dales, New Hope Village, and Exceptional Persons Incorporated.

In their advisory role to Congress, the National Council on Disability provided technical assistance on the bill.

This is an opportunity for us to say that outcomes matter, for us to further a conversation about setting the goal of maximum participation and using all our tools to meet it.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and others to move this legislation forward in the months to come.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, are we in the parliamentary procedure to proceed to speak?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

PAPAL ENCYCLICAL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, tomorrow, Pope Francis will release a papal encyclical on the environment. It is basically a letter to all Catholics about high-priority issues, and he has chosen the environment.

Some might think the Pope is straying outside of his expertise by discussing environmental issues and climate change as the expected encyclical is revealed, but the Pope actually has more of a scientific background than many Members of Congress because the Pope was trained as a chemist before he entered seminary. And, as we have seen over the course of his first 2 years as head of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis is particularly committed to addressing issues that affect the poor.

According to recent news reports, the Pope's encyclical will emphasize the moral imperative that we as a global community face in addressing climate change. He calls every person across all faiths to come together to address the global deterioration of our common home. This stewardship case is a shared common truth for all people—the faith community and all.

Many of us have spoken on this floor about climate change and the resulting sea level rise. The President has spoken about it numerous times recently, and he visited the Florida Everglades in my State recently and made a similar case for the urgent need to take action on climate change and sea level rise.

Taking care of treasured places such as the Everglades isn't just about conservation, it is about survival.

Millions of people in South Florida depend on the Everglades as the source, as that water flows south from upper central Florida and recharges the

aquifers. It is a vital source of drinking water. It is a vital source no one can live without. But drinking water wells in South Florida are already being compromised by saltwater intrusion through the porous limestone foundation of our State.

We had a hearing of our commerce committee in Miami Beach, which is ground zero. A NASA scientist testified that over the last 40 years, measurements—not forecasts, not projections; measurements—over the last 40 years, the sea level has risen 8 inches in South Florida.

What happens when that rises—and, of course, that starts to inundate the porous limestone, which holds the freshwater, which supports the foundation of the peninsula of Florida. You can't do as the Dutch have done—build a dike around it—because the water will seep right underneath your dike into the porous limestone.

So we need to take a hard look at what can be done—and do it soon—to get ready for the impacts of climate change in the future, to stop pumping carbon dioxide, which is the main greenhouse gas, into the atmosphere.

There are a lot of good ideas out there that could protect communities from climate change, and there are a lot of good ideas out there that could help folks pay their bills. For example, my colleague from Rhode Island, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, has proposed a plan to place a carbon fee or a dollar fee per ton of carbon emissions and then use that money to lower everybody's tax rate, both corporate and individual. Let it be revenue neutral. It is a fee on carbon, and the marketplace will then kick in, making it less desirable to put those greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, particularly carbon dioxide.

In the last Congress, Senator BOXER proposed a similar idea of setting a carbon pollution fee. Her bill would have directed that new revenue toward helping communities adopt climate resiliency measures as well as providing a monthly rebate to U.S. households.

Well, maybe we don't have the magic formula yet, but we ought to be able to agree that lowering tax rates for businesses and individuals would be a good thing. But if you are going to do that, you have to have the revenue to pay for it. In other words, you have to have the revenue to replace the revenue that is there now if you lower the tax rates.

If you set a price on carbon emissions, it could generate anywhere from \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion over a decade. That revenue can put money back into the pockets of hard-working people by virtue of lowering their tax rates.

Some people might think this is a political issue that Big Business is unanimously opposed to. When I first heard it, that is what I thought would be the case. But, lo and behold, that is not the case. On June 1, six major oil and gas companies, including Shell, signed a joint letter to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

Change in support of establishing a carbon pricing system. What these giant corporations understand is that something must be done to reduce carbon emissions, and if they do not pursue a carbon fee or something like it, they are going to face what they do not want to face, which is EPA regulation and lawsuits and additional public scrutiny over their contribution to pollution.

In their letter, these CEOs write: "As major companies from the oil and gas sector, we recognize both the importance of climate challenge and the importance of energy to human life and well-being."

If these corporate giants can acknowledge the seriousness and urgency of climate change, then it just doesn't make sense that we can't get over this political hangup about a fee—call it a tax—on carbon and address it here in the Senate.

Many of my colleagues are concerned and frustrated, especially if they live in a State like mine where the sea level is rising. The mayor of Miami Beach cut a TV campaign advertisement in a kayak at seasonal high tide on Alton Road in Miami Beach. Is it any wonder we feel like the canary in the coal mine? So we are sounding the alarm and echoing the warning of scientists, echoing the warning of faith leaders—now the Pope is going to speak tomorrow in his encyclical—and we are echoing the warnings of Americans who are already experiencing real consequences of what is happening with the climate. The State of Florida is the literal canary in the coal mine. The State of Florida is ground zero for all of this that is happening.

This year is going to mark 10 years since Hurricane Katrina, and just last month experts at CBO estimated that with climate change, hurricane damage will skyrocket over the next 60 years. Why? Because as the Earth heats up—when the Sun rays reflect off the Earth and reflect back into space, if the greenhouse gases are there, they act as a shield, and that traps the heat. Where does 90 percent of the heat go? It goes into the world's oceans. The hotter the water, the more fuel for a more ferocious hurricane. Floods, droughts, heat waves, sea level rise, wildfires, melting sea ice—these are costly and deadly consequences.

Regardless of what it takes—the science, the economics, the corporate executives, the moral imperative, and the Pope—we must call attention to the problem. Let's not suffer the same fate as other canaries in the coal mines. I encourage all of our colleagues to look at this issue anew. Look at it with an eye toward confronting the challenge and being good stewards of Earth's bounty that we are all blessed to have.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to speak a few moments as in morning business.

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

CONGRATULATING THE GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I have had three chances to say congratulations to the San Francisco Giants when they won the World Series over the last 5 years, and I didn't do it. Last night, the Golden State Warriors won the NBA Finals, and I want to remedy the error of my ways and come and offer the heartiest congratulations to a truly great basketball team.

This team had a remarkable season. Their regular season of 67 and 15 was the sixth best in the history of the NBA, and they went 16 and 5 in the playoffs. But their dominance wasn't built on brute force; it was built on finesse, strategy, and teamwork.

Steph Curry was a real superstar, offering flashes of brilliance all season. I had the occasion to meet him and have a picture taken with him, and as I stood against this tall American and put my arm around his waist, I realized how slender he was. I subsequently learned they are trying to get him to eat 6,000 calories a day—I guess to meet LeBron James. It was quite a matchup, and I was delighted to be able to watch these games. After a scary fall in game 4 against the Rockets, Steph came back in game 5 to lead the Warriors in scoring, boosting them into the finals.

Last year, when I met them at a Warriors' practice, I saw a little bit about the team. And one player I hadn't met was a gentleman by the name of Andre Iguodala, who really came alive against the Cavaliers in the finals. After playing off the bench the first three games, he started the final three and was the defensive spark the Warriors needed.

Now, no one can stop LeBron James, and as I watched the series, I really marveled at this man because he was a very intelligent player. Once he charged toward that basket, there were very few who could stop him. It was an amazing performance.

All season long, Klay Thompson was an offensive dynamo, stepping up when the team needed him most. And of course Draymond Green, Harrison Barnes, and others.

And what a season for a brand new rookie coach Steve Kerr. He spent his whole life in basketball but has only a handful of months as coach under his belt. He took an undersized team with little playoff experience all the way. It was a dream come true.

I would also like to congratulate the Warriors owners, Joe Lacob and Peter Guber, as well as the team's president, Rick Weltz. I have had the privilege of meeting these three people. Oakland can be very proud of them. They are building a new arena in San Francisco, so the whole Bay Area will have an opportunity to participate in this team's glory. These gentlemen bought the team 4 years ago. And in that short time, they have guided what was a

moribund franchise into the best team in the league. So they rightly should be thanked for their accomplishment.

Finally, to my colleague, the distinguished Senator from Ohio, ROB PORTMAN, I offer my condolences, and I look forward to collecting on our wager, which Mr. President, is some Ohio beer. I trust it is going to be good beer, and I look forward to drinking it and hopefully being able to tell him that there will be another time, and his team can only but rise in glory as well.

Finally, to the Warriors, I look forward to continued greatness, both in Oakland and across the bay in San Francisco. Their first title since 1975 really brought the city of Oakland together and made them proud. I say to them, thank you for some wonderful memories.

Mr. President, 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. INHOFE. 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. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of the remarks of the Senator from Virginia, I be recognized for 5 minutes.

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

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

THE ECONOMY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak about the changing nature of our economy. I come to talk about a part of our economy that I don't think most folks in this Chamber understand. It goes by many names. It is called the sharing economy, the on-demand economy, the gig economy, the 1099 economy. There is a lot of discussion, actually, in some circles about exactly what to call this changing nature of our economy, but there is no dispute that it represents a new dynamic and growing part of our American economy.

It used to be that when you were introduced to someone, one of the first questions asked was, Where do you work? Today, particularly for the 80-plus million millennials who make up the largest age cohort in our society, the more appropriate question to ask is, What are you working on? That is because the American workforce is increasingly made up of freelancers, independent contractors, and the self-employed. Yet Washington mostly has remained on the sidelines as our economy, the workforce, and the workplace have undergone what may be the most dramatic transformation literally in decades.

By my count, as folks announced yesterday, almost 25 people are running for President in 2016. Frankly, I find it remarkable that none of them in either party are even talking about these fundamental changes in how, when, and where Americans are currently working because, whether by economic necessity or by choice, one-third or more of the American workers now find themselves piecing together two, three, or more on-demand opportunities to make a living. As I said earlier, it is called the sharing economy, the on-demand economy, or the gig economy. It includes, as I mentioned earlier as well, a lot of young and—at least they think so—invincible millennials, 80 million-strong, who began entering the workforce in the year 2000 and afterward.

The good news about this generation is it is the best educated, the most diverse and tolerant, the most technologically adept, and the most comfortable with disruptive change of any generation America has seen. And that is good. Most millennials grew up in the glow of a computer monitor. Since childhood, most have maintained an online identity and network in real time with friends. Members of this generation can, if they choose, graduate from a college or university without ever stepping foot on its campus. Armed with a tablet or smart phone, they can successfully work for an employer without ever sitting at a desk from 9 to 5. But it is not just the millennials who are pushing the envelope in how, when, and where people work. It also includes many middle-aged professionals, unexpectedly downsized at midcareer. It includes baby boomers—folks from my generation and a number of my college classmates—who have been hit with a premature end to what they thought before the recession was a solid career. Frankly, it also includes a lot of folks for whom working multiple jobs at the same time is nothing new. They call it survival, and it hasn't gotten any easier. Yet, here in Washington, too few policymakers are thinking creatively about ways to provide more Americans with more footholds into this new world of on-demand or freelance work.

In addition, today we have a whole set of new online platforms, companies that didn't even exist 5 years ago, such as Airbnb, Uber, TaskRabbit, and Etsy. Think about Airbnb alone—it already has more rooms available than Marriott. These platforms match supply and demand for things people never even thought about monetizing before—a room, a ride, a specific skill, even the whole notion of free time. But many of the business models in this on-demand economy are built upon the premise that workers are independent contractors, not employees. This means that employers can end the relationship at any time. Much of the work is project-based. Contracts and clients can dry up, and it is tougher to create new ones without an office to go to. It

also means employers do not have to pay costs or contribute to health insurance or retirement. They also particularly don't pay a share of unemployment or workers' compensation.

The whole notion of the social safety net and social contract between the employer and the worker has totally changed. If we think back to my parents' generation 40 years ago—I think about my father. He didn't make a lot of money but knew that he would get benefits, that when he retired, he would get a pension. That changed in my generation, the baby boomers. You didn't work for the same place. You moved around to a few different jobs. We moved into what I would call the 401(k) generation, defined benefits. We moved to defined contribution.

The fact is, today these on-demand workers, even if they are doing relatively well, exist on a high wire with no social safety net beneath them. That may work for many of them when times are going well—until the day they aren't. That is why ultimately, when things go wrong for this new gig economy, workers without any safety net, without any unemployment, without any workmen's comp, could fall and ultimately end up on the taxpayers' dime.

That is why Washington needs to catch up and start asking some tough policy questions—but also with the recognition that with the growth in this part of the economy, Washington can't impose a solution.

First, the biggest challenge may be this fundamental change in the employer-employee relationship. Are there other options for providing a safety net of basic benefits for workers who are not connected to a traditional full-time employer? Who should administer it? Should it be opt-in or opt-out? We could look to the health care exchanges as a public-private model now—in many cases—that they largely appear to be working. Could we think about an unemployment or workmen's comp exchange that workers and employers could work with?

We might borrow the idea of the hour bank used by the traditional trade unions for 60 years. A carpenter would move from one contractor to another, committing a little bit of resources, the employer committing resources, but it was administered by a trusted third party.

Other countries—primarily in the EU—are experimenting with worker-administered pools. Freelancers put in a certain amount of income based on the income they would need to replace if they got sick or injured, and they collect it if they are sidelined for more than a month.

Part of a solution might even be consumer-driven. What if customers could designate a portion of their payments to Uber or Airbnb into a designated fund that helps support workers—a social insurance fund? There may be other public-private models out there, and they deserve a look, too.

Second, this is too important to leave to the courts. While litigation is underway about whether on-demand workers are independent contractors or employees, we cannot and must not leave this to the courts alone. We learned just today of a ruling from California labor regulators—a ruling that is expected to be challenged. California labor regulators have determined that Uber drivers are to be considered employees and not independent contractors. This ruling demonstrates yet again why Federal policymakers need to reexamine the whole notion of 20th-century definitions and employment classifications when we are thinking about a 21st-century workforce.

As I mentioned, as many as one-third of American workers are participating in some aspect of this on-demand economy. We have a responsibility to provide clarity and predictability instead of allowing inconsistency as these issues are litigated on a case-by-case, State-by-State basis.

Third, the Federal Government needs to become much more nimble. Frankly, folks on both sides of the aisle would acknowledge that the Federal Government operates at less than dial-up speed. We need better data about how many people are a part of the gig and sharing economies.

At the request of Senators MURRAY and GILLIBRAND, the GAO reported last month that the Department of Labor has not been tasked with a deep-dive on workforce data in more than 10 years. Better data would tell us a lot about who is working in this sharing economy and what characteristics they share. Better data would result in better policy.

As Federal policymakers, we also need to recommit to extending broadband to underserved and unserved regions. You can't be linked in if you don't have a link.

In addition, we should streamline the hodgepodge of Federal programs we have set up to support innovators and entrepreneurs. These programs are scattered across dozens of Federal agencies, and they exist in a budgetary cycle of feast or famine.

We cannot ignore the opportunity costs of this generation's combined \$1.2 trillion in student debt. It is limiting options, opportunities, and economic mobility for an entire generation.

Finally, this millennial generation is beginning to fuel a tremendous shift in one of the most traditional anchors of America's economy, and we need to, quite honestly, recognize and respond to it. Younger Americans are making it clear that in many cases they prefer sharing and renting over ownership.

I was talking to Brad Chesky, the CEO of Airbnb, the other day. As I mentioned, Airbnb already provides more rooms than Marriott, and this is a company that didn't even exist 5 years ago. The CEO offered this comparison: His parents' generation—my generation—defined the idea of success

in America as owning a nice house, having two cars, putting your kids through college, and maybe, just maybe, if you did well, getting a little house at the beach or on the lake. But he says the hallmarks of success for this millennial generation are much more different. Younger people want control of their data and online reputations. They don't necessarily aspire to own things such as cars or houses; they want to collect cool experiences, which they can best document and share online.

I ask all my colleagues, the next time you are at a townhall, ask your audience: Would you rather have a home mortgage deduction or a direct credit against your student debt? It doesn't matter what the age group is, 90 percent overall will say: Give me that credit on my student debt rather than on a home mortgage deduction.

Think about this. As policymakers, this generational move away from ownership and toward sharing and renting could have huge impacts for every level of government. That is because we currently use our Tax Code to reward ownership of everything from homes, to vehicles, to factories. Property taxes are how State and local governments pay for public schools, public health, and public safety. If we have an economy increasingly built on sharing and renting and not ownership, that could have tremendous ramifications.

I mentioned that 5 years ago no one had even heard of Airbnb or Uber. And while we don't know what the disruptive technology of tomorrow might look like, we know developments such as driverless cars, same-day drone deliveries, and 3-D printing are right around the corner. Some version is here to stay. As policymakers, we need to ask the right questions, discuss the appropriate rules of the road, and know when we need to get out of the way. Instead of trying to make this new economy look like the old, Washington should encourage more of this innovation, and we need to work to create more opportunities and more upward economic mobility for everybody.

I, for one, look forward to continuing this discussion today and in the weeks to come.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 1911, AS MODIFIED

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, notwithstanding the filing deadline in rule XXII, it be in order for me to offer a modification to the pending Hatch

amendment No. 1911 with the text that is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object—and I will not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I am aware that the Senator from Oklahoma feels very strongly about this amendment. We discussed it and voted on it in the committee. At that time, I told the Senator from Oklahoma—who is my friend, for many years—that I would do what I could to see that he got a vote before the entire Senate. I am in disagreement with his amendment, but I want to respect his right to offer it. So—and I appreciate less than you know his tenacity—Mr. President, I will not object.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I send the amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To study the impact of commissary privatization prior to initiating a pilot program and to require a report on the Department of Defense definition of and policy regarding software sustainment)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPORT AND ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL COSTS AND BENEFITS OF PRIVATIZING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMISSARIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 1, 2016, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report assessing the viability of privatizing, in whole or in part, the Department of Defense commissary system. The report shall be so submitted to Congress before the development of any plans or pilot program to privatize defense commissaries or the defense commissary system.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The assessment required by subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) A methodology for defining the total number and locations of commissaries.

(2) An evaluation of commissary use by location in the following beneficiary categories:

- (A) Pay grades E-1 through E-4.
- (B) Pay grades E-5 through E-7.
- (C) Pay grades E-8 and E-9.
- (D) Pay grades O-1 through O-3.
- (E) Pay grades O-4 through O-6.
- (F) Pay grades O-7 through O-10.
- (G) Military retirees.

(3) An evaluation of commissary use in locations outside the continental United States and in remote and isolated locations in the continental United States when compared with other locations.

(4) An evaluation of the cost of commissary operations during fiscal years 2009 through 2014.

(5) An assessment of potential savings and efficiencies to be achieved through implementation of some or all of recommendations of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

(6) A description and evaluation of the strategy of the Defense Commissary Agency for pricing products sold at commissaries.

(7) A description and evaluation of the transportation strategy of the Defense Commissary Agency for products sold at commissaries.

(8) A description and evaluation of the formula of the Defense Commissary Agency for calculating savings for its customers as a result of its pricing strategy.

(9) An evaluation of the average savings per household garnered by commissary use.

(10) A description and evaluation of the use of private contractors and vendors as part of the defense commissary system.

(11) An assessment of costs or savings, and potential impacts to patrons and the Government, of privatizing the defense commissary system, including potential increased use of Government assistance programs.

(12) A description and assessment of potential barriers to privatization of the defense commissary system.

(13) An assessment of the extent to which patron savings would remain after the privatization of the defense commissary system.

(14) An assessment of the impact of any recommended changes to the operation of the defense commissary system on commissary patrons, including morale and retention.

(15) An assessment of the actual interest of major grocery retailers in the management and operations of all, or part, of the existing defense commissary system.

(16) An assessment of the impact of privatization of the defense commissary system on off-installation prices of similar products available in the system.

(17) An assessment of the impact of privatization of the defense commissary system, and conversion of the Defense Commissary Agency workforce to non-appropriated fund status, on employment of military family members, particularly with respect to pay, benefits, and job security.

(18) An assessment of the impact of privatization of the defense commissary system on Exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) quality-of-life programs.

(c) USE OF PREVIOUS STUDIES.—The Secretary shall consult previous studies and surveys on matters appropriate to the report required by subsection (a), including, but not limited to, the following:

(1) The January 2015 Final Report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

(2) The 2014 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Comprehensive Report.

(3) The 2013 Living Patterns Survey.

(4) The report required by section 634 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291) on the management, food, and pricing options for the defense commissary system.

(d) COMPTROLLER GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF REPORT.—Not later than May 1, 2016, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report setting forth an assessment by the Comptroller General of the report required by subsection (a).

SEC. ____ . REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEFINITION OF AND POLICY REGARDING SOFTWARE SUSTAINMENT.

(a) REPORT ON ASSESSMENT OF DEFINITION AND POLICY.—Not later than March 15, 2016, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees and the President pro tempore of the Senate a report setting forth an assessment, obtained by the Secretary for purposes of the report, on the definition used by the Department of Defense for and the policy of the Department regarding software maintenance, particularly with

respect to the totality of the term “software sustainment” in the definition of “depot-level maintenance and repair” under section 2460 of title 10, United States Code.

(b) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—The assessment obtained for purposes of subsection (a) shall be conducted by a federally funded research and development center (FFRDC), or another appropriate independent entity with expertise in matters described in subsection (a), selected by the Secretary for purposes of the assessment.

(c) ELEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The assessment obtained for purposes of subsection (a) shall address, with respect to software and weapon systems of the Department of Defense (including space systems), each of the following:

(A) Fiscal ramifications of current programs with regard to the size, scope, and cost of software to the program’s overall budget, including embedded and support software, percentage of weapon systems’ functionality controlled by software, and reliance on proprietary data, processes, and components.

(B) Legal status of the Department in regards to adhering to section 2464(a)(1) of such title with respect to ensuring a ready and controlled source of maintenance and sustainment on software for its weapon systems.

(C) Operational risks and reduction to materiel readiness of current Department weapon systems related to software costs, delays, re-work, integration and functional testing, defects, and documentation errors.

(D) Other matters as identified by the Secretary.

(2) ADDITIONAL MATTERS.—For each of subparagraphs (A) through (C) of paragraph (1), the assessment obtained for purposes of subsection (a) shall include review and analysis regarding sole-source contracts, range of competition, rights in technical data, public and private capabilities, integration lab initial costs and sustaining operations, and total obligation authority costs of software, disaggregated by armed service, for the Department.

(d) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SUPPORT.—The Secretary of Defense shall provide the independent entity described in subsection (b) with timely access to appropriate information, data, resources, and analysis so that the entity may conduct a thorough and independent assessment as required under such subsection.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, there is one last comment I wish to make. This is something that doesn’t happen on the Senate floor. But the Senator from Arizona is indeed a very good friend. We disagree on this amendment. We will have a chance to have a vote on it. But the fact that he did make a commitment that I would have the vote is very meaningful to me, and he did keep his word, and I thank him very much.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, 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. GRAHAM. 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. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I wish to inform the body that I had a very good conversation with Secretary Kerry just a few minutes ago. Many of you may have been following the news. There was a statement attributed to Secretary Kerry that the possible military dimension of the Iranian nuclear program was no longer a priority in terms of reconciling what they have been doing in a military fashion with their nuclear program. Some of the words were to the effect that there will be no mea culpa required.

I just got off the phone with him, and he indicated to me that possible military dimensions of the program in terms of the Iranian past behavior are very much on the table and essential to any agreement.

April 8, 2015, here is what Secretary Kerry said. When asked in April if Iran must disclose past military-related nuclear activities as part of an agreement, Secretary Kerry said: They have to do it. It will be done. If there is going to be a deal, it will be done.

Secretary Kerry reaffirmed to me that statement. I appreciate his calling me. I want the body to understand that a good deal with Iran would be a blessing. A bad deal would be a nightmare. The IAEA has not had access to the sites they need in terms of evaluating the possible military dimensions of the Iranian program and have not been allowed to go to Parchin, where we suspect that high explosive detonation was being tested as part of their nuclear weapons ambition.

There are three things that the IAEA wants to look at before it can pass judgment over how far the Iranian nuclear program has gone down the military road. I can’t imagine any deal that does not fully and completely answer every question about possible military dimensions of the Iranian nuclear program, because if you don’t understand what they have done in the past, you don’t know where you are in terms of going forward, and you can’t have a meaningful inspection regime until you understand what they try to do in terms of our military dimension.

I really do appreciate Secretary Kerry calling me. The one thing we learned about the Iranians and their nuclear program is that they cannot be trusted. They have lied, and they have cheated at every turn. There can be no wiggle room when it comes to the Iranians and a nuclear deal. Anytime, anywhere inspections are absolutely a must. Understanding their possible military dimensions is an absolute ingredient along with others.

I am glad to have received this phone call from Secretary Kerry. But all of us need to be aware of whom we are dealing with when it comes to the Iranians and get every i dotted and every t crossed before you would even entertain a deal with the Iranians.

Mr. MCCAIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. GRAHAM. Absolutely.

Mr. MCCAIN. Is it my understanding from the Senator’s statement that Secretary Kerry is now saying that was not an accurate quote of his—

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes.

Mr. MCCAIN. That it was not urgent that the previous activities concerning the development of nuclear weapons would be absolutely required?

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes. He indicated that the statement that was attributed to him was taken out of context, and he reaffirmed to me on the phone that possible military dimensions are an essential part of the deal, as he indicated on April 8, 2015. I think he is issuing a statement or his office is right now. I think it is important for the body to understand that Secretary Kerry wants to clear up the record. I applaud him for that.

I hope we can get a deal we all can live with. But at the end of the day, you have to remember who we are dealing with in terms of the Iranians. They have lied. They have cheated. When it comes to the military dimensions of their program, it is essential we know every detail before we can move forward with confidence.

Mr. MCCAIN. Could I ask additionally this: Did the Senator from South Carolina have an opportunity to ask Secretary Kerry about the latest information concerning Iranians who are now supplying weapons to the Taliban—the same Taliban that has killed many hundreds of Americans and wounded thousands of others? In other words, did you have a chance to ask the Secretary why we are pursuing this agreement while the Iranians’ latest activity is supplying arms to the Taliban to kill Americans; the support of the Shiite militias in Iraq; the support of the Houthis in other countries, including Yemen; the support of the Iranians for Hezbollah in Lebanon, which in Syria is killing off the Free Syrian Army forces that we are supporting; and the continued development by Iran of a nuclear warhead and the vehicle with which to deliver it? I wonder if the Senator from South Carolina had the chance to ask the Secretary of State about those events and situations that exist in the Middle East today.

Mr. GRAHAM. No, I did not. We talked specifically about his statements. But I understand the concern of the Senator from Arizona about the idea of doing an agreement with the Iranians that would give them money to fund what I think has been a very destructive war machine.

From my point of view, we need to look at the Iranian behavior holistically and understand the consequences of flooding this administration with cash—the Iranian administration with cash—given the fact that what they are doing today is using whatever resources they have under sanctions to destabilize the Mideast. I doubt if any additional funds, if sanctions were relieved, would go to build

hospitals or roads. I think they would go into the activity you just described. But this conversation was limited to the statement attributed to him yesterday. I think all of us should be very attuned to what is going on with these negotiations, as it is the most important decision any administration will make probably in modern history. The consequences of a bad deal are enormous. You could start a nuclear arms race in the Mideast. At the end of the day, the behavior of the Iranians, apart from their nuclear ambitions, is at best disturbing and should be, in my view, part of any negotiating package.

But we are where we are, and I am glad to hear from the Secretary himself that possible military dimensions have to be fully explored and understood before you move forward with an agreement.

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

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

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding Rule XXII, the time until 4 p.m. today be equally divided between the managers or their designees; that at 4 p.m. all post-cloture time be expired; further, that if cloture is invoked on H.R. 1735, that the time count as if it was invoked at 10 p.m. tonight and that the mandatory quorum call with respect to this cloture motion be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, 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. KING. 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. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

TREE STREET YOUTH

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I come to the Senate floor with some good news from my home State of Maine. World Refugee Day is this Saturday, and I would like to highlight an organization that sprung up spontaneously in one of our Maine cities that is really making a difference in the lives of young people, particularly young refugees from Somalia, Sudan, and other African countries, helping them to expand their own horizons.

As the roots of our refugee and immigrant population continue to grow stronger in Maine and in the process strengthen our communities, a group called Tree Street Youth is helping to nurture that growth one student at a time. I have visited the Tree Street Youth, and it is an amazing program.

Maine's history, like the rest of America, is inexorably linked to immigration. With the exception of our native tribes, we are all from somewhere else originally. It began with European immigrants from England, Scotland, and Ireland. People with French heritage came down from Canada, and Swedes settled in northern Aroostook County in Maine. African Americans were brought here against their will, but they became part of the stock of this country. For years, immigrants in Maine found work in mills, farms, and fields, and now their descendants are our leaders—business leaders, political leaders, our neighbors, our friends, and our family.

Just as previous waves of immigrants have come to Maine in search of a better life for themselves and their children, newer immigrants—including refugees, asylees, and asylum seekers from Somalia, South Sudan, and several central African countries—are making new homes in Maine and making Maine more diverse, more dynamic, and a better place in the process.

I think it is important to point out that these refugees are people we have, in effect, invited to come to this country because the conditions in their former countries were so unstable or because they feared persecution. These people are not illegal immigrants. They are people, and they are not illegal aliens. They are people here under a legal process. They are looking for a new start, and they are willing to work hard, as we learned in Maine. But anyone who finds themselves in an entirely new and unfamiliar situation—in a situation where they may not be familiar with the language—can always use some help and support, and groups such as the Tree Street Youth in Lewiston are so important and can have such a huge impact because they smooth the transition and help promote cooperation and understanding within the community and particularly the transition of young people.

This remarkable organization was founded in 2011 by two former Bates College students located in the city of Lewiston—Julia Sleeper and Kim Sullivan. They recognized the need for such a group—for such a facility. Tree Street Youth is dedicated to supporting young people in the Lewiston-Auburn area through academics, the arts, and athletics. The organization, which originally grew out of a simple after-school homework help program, now provides local youth with a safe space to promote healthy physical, social, emotional, and academic development.

Through its flourishing arts, college prep, and job-training programs, Tree

Street is not only giving young people the tools, support, and confidence they need to succeed, but it is also helping to bring all students from all backgrounds in the city of Lewiston together.

Tree Street Youth has proven to be a tremendous resource in Lewiston and Auburn, particularly for young people from immigrant families. The support services and sense of community that is provided there empowers these young people to be independent and productive members of society. While integrating into the community can be difficult for recent immigrants, refugees, and their families, the Tree Street experience helps to connect young people to their peers and to the community as a whole. This is a two-way street of understanding that helps bring our communities together.

For example, Tree Street Youth had an annual banquet this past May, and it was, I am told, a fun and emotional event and a showcase that allowed the Tree Street students to share some of their talents with the Lewiston-Auburn community. I am told that after students gave a variety of inspiring poetry readings, dance, and other performances about their experiences, it was hard to find a dry eye in the house. That really speaks to the life-changing power that this organization has brought to our community.

Just as Tree Street Youth improves young lives, these young people can in turn improve Maine and America. We need motivated, talented, and creative people from all backgrounds if we are going to keep pace with the rest of the world. We need students like Muna Muhammad, whom I met here just a few weeks ago when she represented Maine in the Senate Youth Leadership Program. Muna, whose family is from Somalia, is the president of her class at Lewiston High School, serves as a student representative on the Lewiston school committee, is involved in her school's speech, mock trial, and civil rights teams, and has a long list of other accomplishments. They highlight her remarkable leadership qualities, which radiate when you meet her.

This is what America is all about. It is about families from around the world finding a new start, bringing with them new perspectives, new ideas, and new hope for the future. It is the mainspring of the American experience. It is about a melting pot of peoples, cultures, and ideas that create a tapestry that is much stronger than any single thread.

Welcoming new people and cultures hasn't always been easy, and it is not easy. Sometimes our differences are more immediately apparent than our similarities, but over the years, immigrants and refugees have proven to be an irreplaceable part—the essential part—of who America is.

This wonderful organization started spontaneously in one of our great cities of Maine. Tree Street Youth has proven that support and community engagement can help ease that transition and

create a brighter future for those students, for Maine, and for our entire country. That is good news for Maine and good news for the United States.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PORTS ACT

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the PORTS Act, legislation I have introduced to protect the American economy from crippling labor disputes at our seaports. Somebody asked why a Senator from Colorado was interested in legislation dealing with the work stoppage or slowdown that occurred on our ports on the west coast. Well, I will tell you why.

I was contacted by numerous businesses and people that had their entire furniture lines taken out of their furniture stores. I talked to ranchers who had to face threats of a \$1 billion ag export market. I talked to onion growers who watched as their domestic commodity prices crashed due to the port slowdown. I watched as stories were written in newspapers about apple growers in Washington unable to export apples so they dumped apples just to rot in the fields in Washington State.

Trade through U.S. seaports is critical. We have been spending weeks on this floor and the floor of the House talking about the Trans-Pacific Partnership and talking about the importance of trade promotion authority, and none of that is possible without an active, successful port system in this country.

According to the American Association of Port Authorities, U.S. ports support 23 million jobs, and the value of related economic activity accounts for 26 percent of our national gross domestic product.

Contract negotiations and related labor disputes at our ports clog up these vital arteries and lead to delays, higher costs, and lost business for industries throughout our country. Strikes, lockouts, and slowdowns may have been business as usual for labor unions in the past, but an increasingly global economy means that the collateral damage done to American workers and businesses has increased exponentially.

The U.S. economy recently endured a 9-month labor dispute that affected all 29 of our west coast ports. The resulting logistical nightmare caused delays, higher costs, and lost businesses for industries in Colorado and throughout the United States. Ships full of cargo were anchored off our coast waiting for longshoremen to do their job on unloading international goods and loading American-made products for ship-

ment to markets across the world. In Los Angeles and Long Beach alone, dozens of container ships sat anchored and idle.

After 9 months and huge financial costs to our national economy, the parties reached an agreement in February to allow cargo to begin moving normally through the west coast ports again. Four months later, we are finally seeing that congestion beginning to ease, but it has taken this long.

Many economists, including the Federal Reserve Board of Governors cited the labor dispute as a primary cause of the 0.7-percent decline in GDP in the first quarter of 2015. That means 29 west coast ports were primarily responsible for a 0.7-percent decline in GDP.

Agricultural exports, including apples, hay, and Christmas trees lost export opportunities to overseas customers because they couldn't get products to market. Meat and poultry companies lost sales and faced port charges in excess of \$30 million per week. Retail shipments were delayed from reaching store shelves, and some stores resorted to expensive air freight to stock goods. Manufacturers waiting on shipments had to shut down production lines and risked losing contracts with foreign customers.

Colorado supplies Asia with over \$500 million in beef products through the west coast ports, which accounts for about 23 percent of Colorado's total exports and 57 percent of Colorado's international exports. These and other meat and poultry exporters saw many of their products spoil as shipments were turned away at the port gates.

Grain, machine parts, coal, fishing supplies, furniture, fresh produce, and pliable metals are all products of Colorado, and all were damaged by the labor dispute.

Our exporters' relationships with Asian customers disintegrated as their orders were caught in the bottleneck. And storefronts lost customers because products took months to reach show floors.

When Congress enacted Taft-Hartley nearly 70 years ago, Congress decided the health and reputation of the greatest economy in the world should not be used as leverage in labor contract negotiations.

The opening statement of the act explains that Congress intended to minimize "industrial strife which interferes with the normal flow of commerce." That means current law had provided a remedy, but unfortunately the administration did not use it.

Under that very provision of Taft-Hartley, when a labor dispute threatens the national economy, the President is empowered to use the Federal courts to seek an injunction to end labor practices causing widespread disruptions. With 70 years of case law backing it up, this is a tried-and-true process that ensures that the self-interests and greed of a few does not impact the livelihoods of the many.

Yet, when the west coast ports dispute threatened businesses and entire

industries in States across the country, the President refused to act. For months, the Federal Executive decided not to exercise his authority under Taft-Hartley, depriving the country of critical dispute resolution powers.

Legislation I have introduced, known as the PORTS Act, prevents this kind of economic disruption. It would discourage disruptions at U.S. ports by strengthening and expanding the well-known Taft-Hartley process.

As we saw recently, the President of the United States may not be willing to adequately protect the economic rights and interests of American citizens. The PORTS Act would solve this by granting State Governors Taft-Hartley powers currently reserved for the President.

A Governor from any State would have the opportunity to form a board of inquiry and start the Taft-Hartley process whenever a port labor dispute is causing economic harm. Once the board reports back, any Governor can petition Federal courts to enjoin slowdowns, strikes or lockouts at ports in their State.

The act would also explicitly include slowdowns as a trigger for Taft-Hartley powers, preventing the President or Governors from using legal ambiguity to excuse an action. As a result, this legislation would give a stronger voice to local leaders by allowing those who are most affected by disruptions—local community leaders, business, employees, and consumers—to apply pressure on their Governors rather than trying to mobilize a national campaign to convince the President to act.

In just 5 years, the labor contracts at both the east coast and the west coast ports will expire, possibly leading to labor disputes on both ends of the country. When the health of the national economy is threatened, the Federal Government has a duty to act, but it is clear the current Taft-Hartley powers depend too heavily on who controls the Presidency.

It is critical that we have the necessary tools in place to prevent another debilitating crisis. So I urge my fellow colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation. Countless retail organizations, individual businesses, and people across this country recognize the need to avoid in 5 years simultaneous slowdowns or shutdowns on the east and west coasts—what we just went through.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

KING V. BURWELL DECISION

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, people across the country are eagerly anticipating the Supreme Court's decision in

King v. Burwell and for good reason. This case will likely determine once and for all whether the Obama administration violated its own law when it opted to issue health insurance tax subsidies to those who purchased insurance on federally run exchanges.

Many have argued that this decision by the Supreme Court will determine the fate of the so-called Affordable Care Act. While that argument may be a little dramatic, it isn't far off.

I have my own views on how the Court should rule in this case. Indeed, I have made it abundantly clear that in my view, the statute unambiguously limits the availability of premium tax subsidies to insurance plans purchased on State-run exchanges. I have also stated numerous times my belief that the Obama administration overstepped its authority and broke its own law when it offered subsidies to patients on exchanges established by the Federal Government.

However, as we all await the outcome of the case, we need to be clear on one point. Regardless of how the Court rules in King v. Burwell, ObamaCare will continue to inflict harm on patients and taxpayers until it is repealed and replaced with sensible, patient-centered reform.

Last week, President Obama reiterated that he had no alternative plan in place in the event that the Supreme Court rules against the administration in this case. On top of that, he flipantly stated that "Congress could fix this whole thing with a one-sentence provision."

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The problems with ObamaCare are so fundamental and convoluted that the idea that the entire law could be fixed in one sentence borders on laughable.

The President and his allies in Congress have gotten pretty good at cherry-picking favorable data points in order to claim that ObamaCare is working, but the overall numbers do not lie. Earlier this month, the administration announced proposed rate hikes of 10 percent or more for health insurance plans that enroll more than 6 million people in 41 States. This is just the latest premium hike patients and consumers have seen under ObamaCare, despite the fact that the authors of the law—including the President himself—promised it would bring costs down.

The failure to reduce costs isn't the only broken promise we have seen with ObamaCare. Millions of Americans have lost their insurance plans and their doctors due to the overly burdensome mandates embedded in the law. Many of these same people were forced to navigate a failed Web site that jeopardized their private information. Others were forced to purchase plans that included coverage they didn't need or want.

As a result of this misguided law, many hard-working taxpayers received incorrect tax documents relating to their premium subsidies, followed by a surprise tax bill. Just yesterday, the

Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General issued a report noting that the administration did not have systems in place to ensure that ObamaCare credits that went out last year were accurate. This vulnerability may be leading to untold billions in fraud, waste, and abuse.

I could go on. The problems and hardships associated with ObamaCare have been well documented, and none of them can be solved with a one-sentence bill.

Millions of Americans have already suffered under ObamaCare, and if over the next few weeks the Supreme Court confirms that the administration broke the law by offering subsidies on Federal exchanges, millions more will face the negative consequences of this poorly drafted statute. In fact, a study published today by Avalere shows that these consumers could face annual premium contribution increases of \$3,300 in 2015.

Fortunately, Republicans in Congress have a transition plan to protect these patients. Indeed, there is a wide consensus that should the Court rule against the government in King v. Burwell, we need to act to protect Americans from further suffering at the hands of ObamaCare's broken promises.

Toward that end, I support a transition plan that provides temporary financial assistance to those who would lose subsidies as a result of the Court's decision, to help them to keep their insurance if they want it.

At the same time, the transition plan should peel back ObamaCare's burdensome mandates, give individuals more flexibility to purchase coverage that meets their needs, and give States the ability to develop policies to better serve their citizens.

This temporary transition should build a bridge that gets us away from ObamaCare and puts us on a path toward lasting, patient-centered reform. Of course, this ultimate goal will have to wait until a new administration is in place—one that is actually willing to work with Congress to address the actual needs of patients and taxpayers.

Despite the claims of uninformed critics, Republicans in Congress have been working for months to ensure that a transition plan will be ready when the Court delivers its ruling. And, make no mistake, we will do our best to be ready.

At the same time, Republicans in both Chambers have worked together to put forward substantive and workable alternatives that would permanently replace the President's health care law with reforms that increase patient choice and reduce the role of the Federal Government in health care.

I am a coauthor of one such plan called the Patient CARE Act. I, along with Chairman ALEXANDER and Congressman UPTON in the House, released the latest version of this plan earlier this year. The plan has gotten high marks from a number of analysts and publications.

So while it is a common refrain by supporters of ObamaCare that chaos will ensue if the Court rules against the government in King v. Burwell, the facts tell a much different story. Republicans in Congress will be ready to respond quickly and decisively to any possible outcome.

Now, let's be clear. None of us knows how the Court is going to rule in this case. I have heard analyses and predictions that vary across the board. But no matter how this particular case turns out, we know for certain that ObamaCare has been a dismal failure for American patients and hard-working taxpayers. This entire case is yet another reminder of how, more than 5 years after it was signed, this bill continues to cause problems. No matter how the Court rules in King v. Burwell, we need to chart a different course on health care for the American people.

Let's face it. One reason we would set up a timeframe in case the Supreme Court rules against Secretary Burwell and the administration is that we need to set up a timeline where we can work on these matters and hopefully bring a national consensus to bear. Only so will we be able to resolve the problems that will be found—that are there—if we don't do what is right. So it is going to take some time. That is why we suggest that there should be time leading well into the next administration to be able to work on this to accomplish these matters and, during that time, make sure nobody is hurt because of the decision of King v. Burwell should it go against the government.

This is one of the great problems of our time, and there is no simple answer, but we know we can't continue under the current law of ObamaCare as it is written. If we do, we are just going to continue to go down a sinkhole of expenditures, debts, doctors leaving their profession, and an inability to provide the health care that so glowingly was spoken of by this administration.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator withhold?

Mr. HATCH. I am glad to withhold.

Mr. INHOFE. First of all, let me say the senior Senator from Utah is doing a yeoman's job of exposing some of the fraudulent things we have been involved in for ObamaCare over this period of time, and I applaud him for that.

AMENDMENT NO. 1911, AS FURTHER MODIFIED

Earlier today, I made a motion that was incomplete, and I wish to correct it, having to do with a drafting error.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Hatch amendment No. 1911 be further modified to address a drafting error.

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

The amendment, as further modified, is as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPORT AND ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL COSTS AND BENEFITS OF PRIVATIZING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMISSARIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than February 1, 2016, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report assessing the viability of privatizing, in whole or in part, the Department of Defense commissary system. The report shall be so submitted to Congress before the development of any plans or pilot program to privatize defense commissaries or the defense commissary system.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The assessment required by subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) A methodology for defining the total number and locations of commissaries.

(2) An evaluation of commissary use by location in the following beneficiary categories:

- (A) Pay grades E-1 through E-4.
- (B) Pay grades E-5 through E-7.
- (C) Pay grades E-8 and E-9.
- (D) Pay grades O-1 through O-3.
- (E) Pay grades O-4 through O-6.
- (F) Pay grades O-7 through O-10.
- (G) Military retirees.

(3) An evaluation of commissary use in locations outside the continental United States and in remote and isolated locations in the continental United States when compared with other locations.

(4) An evaluation of the cost of commissary operations during fiscal years 2009 through 2014.

(5) An assessment of potential savings and efficiencies to be achieved through implementation of some or all of recommendations of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

(6) A description and evaluation of the strategy of the Defense Commissary Agency for pricing products sold at commissaries.

(7) A description and evaluation of the transportation strategy of the Defense Commissary Agency for products sold at commissaries.

(8) A description and evaluation of the formula of the Defense Commissary Agency for calculating savings for its customers as a result of its pricing strategy.

(9) An evaluation of the average savings per household garnered by commissary use.

(10) A description and evaluation of the use of private contractors and vendors as part of the defense commissary system.

(11) An assessment of costs or savings, and potential impacts to patrons and the Government, of privatizing the defense commissary system, including potential increased use of Government assistance programs.

(12) A description and assessment of potential barriers to privatization of the defense commissary system.

(13) An assessment of the extent to which patron savings would remain after the privatization of the defense commissary system.

(14) An assessment of the impact of any recommended changes to the operation of the defense commissary system on commissary patrons, including morale and retention.

(15) An assessment of the actual interest of major grocery retailers in the management and operations of all, or part, of the existing defense commissary system.

(16) An assessment of the impact of privatization of the defense commissary system on off-installation prices of similar products available in the system.

(17) An assessment of the impact of privatization of the defense commissary system,

and conversion of the Defense Commissary Agency workforce to non-appropriated fund status, on employment of military family members, particularly with respect to pay, benefits, and job security.

(18) An assessment of the impact of privatization of the defense commissary system on Exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) quality-of-life programs.

(c) **USE OF PREVIOUS STUDIES.**—The Secretary shall consult previous studies and surveys on matters appropriate to the report required by subsection (a), including, but not limited to, the following:

(1) The January 2015 Final Report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

(2) The 2014 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Comprehensive Report.

(3) The 2013 Living Patterns Survey.

(4) The report required by section 634 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291) on the management, food, and pricing options for the defense commissary system.

(d) **COMPTROLLER GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF REPORT.**—Not later than May 1, 2016, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report setting forth an assessment by the Comptroller General of the report required by subsection (a). Section 652 of the Act shall be null and void.

SEC. ____ . REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEFINITION OF AND POLICY REGARDING SOFTWARE SUSTAINMENT.

(a) **REPORT ON ASSESSMENT OF DEFINITION AND POLICY.**—Not later than March 15, 2016, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees and the President pro tempore of the Senate a report setting forth an assessment, obtained by the Secretary for purposes of the report, on the definition used by the Department of Defense for and the policy of the Department regarding software maintenance, particularly with respect to the totality of the term “software sustainment” in the definition of “depot-level maintenance and repair” under section 2460 of title 10, United States Code.

(b) **INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.**—The assessment obtained for purposes of subsection (a) shall be conducted by a federally funded research and development center (FFRDC), or another appropriate independent entity with expertise in matters described in subsection (a), selected by the Secretary for purposes of the assessment.

(c) **ELEMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The assessment obtained for purposes of subsection (a) shall address, with respect to software and weapon systems of the Department of Defense (including space systems), each of the following:

(A) Fiscal ramifications of current programs with regard to the size, scope, and cost of software to the program’s overall budget, including embedded and support software, percentage of weapon systems’ functionality controlled by software, and reliance on proprietary data, processes, and components.

(B) Legal status of the Department in regards to adhering to section 2464(a)(1) of such title with respect to ensuring a ready and controlled source of maintenance and sustainment on software for its weapon systems.

(C) Operational risks and reduction to materiel readiness of current Department weapon systems related to software costs, delays, re-work, integration and functional testing, defects, and documentation errors.

(D) Other matters as identified by the Secretary.

(2) **ADDITIONAL MATTERS.**—For each of subparagraphs (A) through (C) of paragraph (1), the assessment obtained for purposes of subsection (a) shall include review and analysis regarding sole-source contracts, range of competition, rights in technical data, public and private capabilities, integration lab initial costs and sustaining operations, and total obligation authority costs of software, disaggregated by armed service, for the Department.

(d) **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SUPPORT.**—The Secretary of Defense shall provide the independent entity described in subsection (b) with timely access to appropriate information, data, resources, and analysis so that the entity may conduct a thorough and independent assessment as required under such subsection.

Mr. INHOFE. Thank you, 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. MCCAIN. 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. MCCAIN. Mr. President, shortly we will have a vote. I would like to say a few words about the legislation before we do. How much time is remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. About 13 minutes remains.

Mr. MCCAIN. I say to my colleagues, this Defense Authorization Act is a reform bill. I repeat: It is a reform bill—a reform bill that will enable our military to rise to the challenges of a more dangerous world both today and in the future. It tackles acquisition reform, military retirement reform, personnel reform, headquarters and management reform.

We identified \$10 billion of excess and unnecessary spending from the President’s budget request. We are reinvesting it in military capabilities for our warfighters and reforms that can yield long-term savings for the Department of Defense. We did all of this while upholding our commitments to our servicemembers, retirees, and their families.

On acquisition reform, we put the services back into the acquisition process, created new mechanisms to ensure accountability for results, streamlined regulation, and opened up the defense acquisition process to our Nation’s innovators.

On military reform, we modernized and improved our military retirement system. Today, 83 percent of servicemembers leave the service with no retirement assets or benefits. Under this new plan, 75 percent of servicemembers would get benefits. This reform, over time, is estimated to save \$15 billion per year in the outyears.

On management reform, we ensure that the Department of Defense and the military services are using precious defense dollars to fulfill their missions and defend the Nation, not expand their bloated staffs. Targeted reductions in headquarters and administrative staff in this legislation—which is a

7.5-percent mandated reduction per year, up to a 30-percent reduction in the size of headquarters and administrative staff—will generate \$1.7 billion in savings just for fiscal year 2016.

With these savings and billions more identified throughout the bill, we accelerated shipbuilding, added an upgraded fighter aircraft, invested in key modernization priorities across the services, and met our commanders' most urgent needs. As adversaries threaten our military technological advantage, the bill looks to the future and invests in new breakthrough technologies, including directed energy and unmanned combat aircraft.

The legislation is a reflection of the growing threats we face in the world. The legislation authorizes nearly \$3.8 billion in support for Afghan security forces as they continue to defend their country in the gains of the last decade against our common enemies. The legislation authorizes the provision of defensive lethal assistance to Ukraine to help it build combat capability and defend its sovereign territory. It supports the efforts by Lebanon and Jordan to secure their borders against ISIL. It creates a new initiative to help Southeast Asian nations build maritime domain awareness capabilities to address growing sovereignty challenges in the South China Sea.

This is an ambitious piece of legislation, but in the times we live in, that is exactly what we need.

Henry Kissinger told our committee earlier this year that our Nation faces the most diverse and complex array of crises since the end of World War II. Rising to these challenges requires bold reform to our national defense. This legislation represents a strong first step in that direction.

As I said, this is a reform bill. This is an authorizing bill. This brings about much needed reforms. I cannot go to the people of Arizona and justify defense spending when there is a \$2.4 billion cost overrun on an aircraft carrier, when there are a number of weapons systems which billions of dollars have been invested in and which have never become reality. That system has to be reformed. That is what this bill does.

We have to reform our military retirement system. We allow people, after just 2 years of service, to contribute to their own retirement. Today, they have to wait 20 years in order to do that.

We upgrade fighter aircraft.

We tell the defense industry that they cannot have those cost overruns. If there are cost overruns, the service chiefs have to personally sign that they know of, are aware of, and are taking action to prevent further cost overruns.

So there is a lot in this legislation. It is an authorizing legislation. That is why it disturbs me a great deal to hear my colleagues on the other side of the aisle saying they want to vote against it because of OCO. That is not sufficient reason in these times. If they

want to fight against OCO, the place to do it—the overseas contingency operation money which brings up authorizing spending to the same level that the President has requested—if they want to do that, then let's have that fight in another arena. But let's not take away from the men and women who are serving in this military the equipment and the training and the leadership that is demanded in the world as it is today—in the words of Henry Kissinger, more diverse and complex array of crises since the end of World War II.

So I urge all of my colleagues to restate their commitment to the defense of this Nation by voting in favor of this legislation and cloture prior to that. I urge my colleagues—all of them—to understand that we can fight about this funding situation, the need to repeal sequestration—sequestration is destroying our military's capability to defend this Nation. Every uniformed service leader who appeared before the Armed Services Committee said that with sequestration, we are putting the lives of the men and women in uniform at greater risk. We should not do that. We ask young men and women to volunteer for the military, and yet we here in Congress won't take action to keep them from being placed in greater danger. That is an abrogation of our responsibility. This bill does not fix all that, but it certainly is a major step in the right direction.

Almost all of this legislation was done on a bipartisan basis. There were literally—there were some small disagreements, but overall the committee together.

Now, at the behest of their leadership and perhaps the President of the United States, they are so torqued up about OCO that they may vote against this legislation's passage, and that, my friends, is an abrogation of their responsibility to the men and women who are serving this country. If they choose to vote against this legislation on the grounds that they are opposed to the funding mechanism used to do so, then they have their priorities upside down, and I intend to tell the American people about it because I believe that we are not serving the men and women who are serving this country to the best of their ability and not receiving the support they need and deserve from the Senate of the United States of America.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 1911, AS FURTHER MODIFIED

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I am speaking on an amendment that the Senate will be voting on shortly, the Inhofe-Mikulski amendment. Really,

the amendment was led by the distinguished Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE. This is really about commissaries.

We are here ready to vote on the Department of Defense authorization. We want to stand up for our troops. One of the most important things we can do is to stand up for their families.

Senator INHOFE and I are deeply concerned that DOD has the misguided viewpoint that shrinking or eliminating or privatizing the commissaries will save money for the U.S. Department of Defense. We do not even know what the impact of that will be. Senator INHOFE, with my encouragement and support, wants to have an amendment that would actually look at the impact of privatization and a private program to do so. So I want my side of the aisle to know we stand shoulder to shoulder on this. The Senator from Oklahoma has done an outstanding job as always in standing up for the troops and their very important benefits.

I note that he is on the floor. I ask that when the rollcall is called, we support the Inhofe-Mikulski amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for a couple of minutes.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first, I wish to say to the Senator from Maryland how much I appreciate the fact that we are reaching across the aisle and doing something that is right for the kids who are out there risking their lives for us.

I make it a habit to go to the areas of combat with regularity, as do other members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and I always get a chance to really talk with and get to know them. You learn a lot more by talking to the kids in the mess hall there than you do by going to the committee hearings here in the United States.

One of the things they have a real love for, as I am sure the Senator from Maryland suggested to you, is the commissary. In some areas that are remote, there is no competition. There aren't any Walmarts around; there is just a commissary. And there is almost a fraternal belief and feeling, as people go around—particularly, the spouses will meet there. They will do their shopping there. It is something that is very serious to them.

There is language in this bill that says that they will take an experiment in some five different areas that have large commissaries, go ahead and privatize those, and then after that takes place, do an assessment as to whether they should be privatized.

This amendment is very simple. It merely says: Let's do the assessment first. Why go ahead and close these commissaries if we find that is something that we should not, in fact, do?

We have so many interests. First of all, we have—as I am sure the Senator

from Maryland mentioned—we have some 25 cosponsors already. This is without real effort. We also have some 41 organizations supporting this bill.

I see that the time is up.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I yield to the Chair.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1911, AS FURTHER MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to Hatch amendment No. 1911, as further modified.

The amendment (No. 1911), as further modified, was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1456

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the yeas and nays be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to McCain amendment No. 1456.

The amendment (No. 1456) was agreed to.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to make a point of order against all the pending nongermane amendments en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 1564, AS MODIFIED; 1825; 1559, AS MODIFIED; 1543, AS MODIFIED; 1645; AND 1486

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I make a point of order that the following amendments are not germane: amendments Nos. 1564, 1825, 1559, 1543, 1645, and 1486.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The point of order is sustained, and the amendments fall.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1463, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 1463, as amended.

The amendment (No. 1463), as amended, was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 1735, an act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, John McCain, Richard C. Shelby, Jeff Flake, John Barrasso, John Cornyn, Mike Rounds, Jeff Sessions, Shelley Moore Capito, Lamar Alexander, Lindsey Graham, Joni Ernst, John Hoeven, Roger F. Wicker, Kelly Ayotte, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 1735, an act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

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 Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 84, nays 14, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 214 Leg.]

YEAS—84

Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Ayotte	Fischer	Nelson
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Bennet	Gardner	Perdue
Blumenthal	Graham	Peters
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Booker	Hatch	Reed
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rounds
Cantwell	Hirono	Sasse
Capito	Hoeven	Schatz
Cardin	Inhofe	Schumer
Carper	Isakson	Scott
Cassidy	Johnson	Sessions
Coats	Kaine	Shaheen
Cochran	King	Shelby
Collins	Kirk	Stabenow
Coons	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Corker	Lankford	Tester
Cornyn	McCain	Thune
Cotton	McCaskill	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	Menendez	Udall
Donnelly	Mikulski	Vitter
Durbin	Moran	Warner
Enzi	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murphy	Wicker

NAYS—14

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reid
Brown	Leahy	Sanders
Casey	Manchin	Warren
Cruz	Markey	Wyden
Franken	Merkley	

NOT VOTING—2

Lee Rubio

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 84, the nays are 14.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Kansas.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I rise this evening in support of more than 1,700 high school students who happen to be in our Nation's capital, in fact, this week. They are part of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. During this year's tour, students will participate in leadership training and gain firsthand insight into the legislative process.

Those electric cooperatives that sponsor these kids coming to Washington, DC, from my State, yours, and every other State across the country, are more than just poles and wires. They are about people and communities. Recognizing that youth are the future of those communities is what the rural electric cooperative program is all about—sending 51 students to Washington, DC, for 51 straight years, so future leaders can have a front-row seat to American Government.

What would rural communities look like without power? That is pretty difficult to imagine. Think about the power of electric cooperatives. Sure, our local electric co-ops keep the lights on, but, as I say, they do much more than that. Co-ops are not-for-profits and owned by their members. They recognize the need to invest in future generations. Co-ops give back to the communities they serve, and the Youth Tour is proof of that.

Each year, I enjoy taking time to visit with Kansans who are part of the Youth Tour because they are among the most energetic, engaging, and respectful young men and women I see throughout the year in Washington, DC. It is always valuable for us to have folks from our home States come and visit us, but it is especially pleasing to have these young men and women visit us. In my view, it is a program that has figured out how to find the best and brightest and those with the greatest interest and find a way for them to come to Washington, DC, and see our Nation's Capitol and hopefully inspire them to continue their interest in government and politics throughout their lives.

Youth Tour alumni have gone on to become university presidents, Fortune 500 CEOs, Members of Congress, and built lifelong friendships. In fact, just last week I had Jacob Helm in my office. He is from Norcatatur, KS, a small town along the Colorado-Nebraska part of our State. Jacob is an individual I nominated to attend the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, and he just graduated. He is now engaged to a fellow Youth Tour alumna, Michelle Peschel of Axtell, KS, which is on the other side of the State—Nebraska more than the Missouri part of our State. Both Jacob and Michelle grew up in communities of fewer than 500 people, and I am proud to see them giving back to their State and their country. They became engaged as a result of meeting each other on a Youth Tour back when they were in high school and will soon be married.