

to these two markets. Therefore, I think it is safe to say that Utah-based exporters will benefit greatly from the expanded market access they will undoubtedly see if we can get both the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership over the finish line.

Of course, without TPA, these two important trade agreements, which are among the largest and most ambitious agreements in our Nation's history, don't stand a chance. TPA gives our negotiators the tools they need to get the best deals possible. TPA gives Congress and our constituents a strong voice in the negotiating process, and, of course, TPA assures that once an agreement is reached, our country will be able to deliver on the deal.

Utahns depend on international trade. Utah's job creators, like those throughout the country, need greater access to foreign markets in order to compete. Put simply, they are not going to get that access without TPA.

So for the sake of the thousands of Utah companies that export goods around the world and the tens of thousands of Utahns whose jobs depend on those exports—and for the hundreds of thousands of companies all over this country and more—I urge my colleagues to join me one more time in supporting our TPA legislation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

(The remarks of Mr. GRASSLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 1648 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4 p.m., recessed until 5 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. AYOTTE).

DEFENDING PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

JASON SIMCAKOSKI MEMORIAL OPIOID SAFETY ACT

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I rise not to speak about an issue that divides this Chamber but rather one that unites us; that is, the care of those who have served and sacrificed for our Nation, America's veterans.

Today, I take great pride in the fact I have worked across the aisle to introduce bipartisan VA reform legislation, the Jason Simcakoski Memorial Opioid Safety Act. I am pleased to be joined in offering this legislation by my friend and colleague Senator CAPITO of West Virginia.

This legislation is aimed at addressing the problem of overprescribing practices at the VA and providing safer and more effective pain management services to our Nation's veterans. It is named in honor of a Wisconsin veteran, U.S. Marine veteran Jason Simcakoski.

On August 30, 2014, Jason tragically died at Wisconsin's Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center as a result of what was medically deemed mixed-drug toxicity. I call this a failure to serve someone who has faithfully served our country.

At the time of his death at the VA, Jason was on 14 different prescription drugs. Yet this Marine's heartbreaking story is just one example of the overprescribing problem at the VA.

After two, decade-long, wars, a large number of our servicemembers are coming home with the damage of combat, and our veterans and their families are facing the difficult challenge of physical injuries, PTSD, and other mental illnesses.

Unfortunately, I believe the VA's overreliance on powerful and highly addicting opioids has resulted in getting our veterans hooked rather than getting them help. Jason's story is a tragic example of the devastation caused by addiction—addiction whose roots are, regrettably, at the VA.

To me, overprescription of opioids at the VA is a root problem, and it is growing into a weed—a weed of addiction whose impact is being felt beyond the walls of VA facilities. The ripples are indeed being felt across America in the communities we work for every day in our Nation's Capital.

The families whom we have a responsibility to represent—families of those who have bravely served our country—are struggling with the loss of a son or a daughter, a father or a mother, a sister or a brother to addiction whose root is planted within the VA system. It is our job to make sure they do not feel alone, and I believe we have a shared responsibility to do everything we can to pull out this weed by its roots.

Jason's family is in Washington today, and I am so honored to have worked with them and others in putting these reforms together to provide the VA with the tools it needs to help prevent this type of tragedy from occurring to other veterans and their families.

I want to thank the Simcakoski family and let them know I have a tremendous amount of respect for the courage they have shown in telling theirs and Jason's story and working to make a difference in the lives of other veterans and their families.

Their story is one of a sacred trust we must have with our veterans and their families. It is a story of how that trust has been broken, and it is a tragic story of loss.

My message to my colleagues comes from Jason's widow Heather, who has said:

When I look back at the past, I want to know we made a difference. I want to believe we have leaders in our country who care. I want to inspire others to never give up because change is possible.

Her words have inspired me, and it is my hope they will inspire my colleagues to join us in taking action. I hope I speak for all of us when I say there is no room for politics when it comes to ensuring that our Nation's veterans receive the timely, safe, and highest quality care that they have earned.

Our legislation takes steps to give veterans and their families a stronger voice in their care by strengthening opioid prescribing guidelines and other measures. It also works to improve coordination and communication throughout the VA and puts in place stronger oversight and accountability for the quality of care we are providing our veterans.

Our goal is simple: put these bipartisan reforms in place to prevent tragedies like Jason's from occurring to other veterans and their families.

I wish to thank and recognize Senators BLUMENTHAL, BROWN, HIRONO, JOHNSON, KAINE, MANCHIN, MARKEY, MORAN, MURRAY, SANDERS, and TESTER for joining Senator CAPITO and me, signing on as original cosponsors of this bipartisan effort. I also wish to thank the many veterans service organizations and medical professionals for their invaluable support, insight, and input as we crafted this legislation.

Today, I ask the rest of my colleagues to join us in working to confront the problems of overprescribing practices at the VA and to provide more safe and effective pain management services to our Nation's veterans.

Let us work together to fix what has been broken and restore that sacred trust with our veterans and their families. Let us work together to give our veterans and their families a voice—a voice that is heard, respected, and recognized. Let us be inspired by that voice to take bipartisan action on solutions to prevent these problems and tragedies from ever happening again and to provide our veterans and their families with the care they have earned and the care they deserve.

Madam President, I yield time to my coauthor on this bill Senator CAPITO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I come here before you today, joined by

my colleague Senator BALDWIN from Wisconsin—but also by colleagues from both sides of the aisle, as she mentioned—in support of legislation to provide safer and more effective pain management to our Nation's veterans.

Too many of our veterans have returned from overseas duties only to fight another battle here at home. The Jason Simcakoski Memorial Opioid Safety Act takes the necessary steps to address challenges faced by our veterans.

Again, I thank the Simcakoskis for their bravery and courage, as painful as it is for the family, in hopes that it will help—and it will help—the next generation of veterans who are being treated at the VA.

This bill reforms the overreliance on painkillers by the VA while still ensuring that veterans receive appropriate medication. This legislation not only updates and strengthens the guidelines for opioid prescriptions, but it requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to expand the scope of research, education, delivery, and integration of alternative pain management. Chronic pain should not be something our veterans are forced to live with, and the VA must be on the cutting edge of developing effective pain management.

This bill will elevate the role of patient advocates—as I am sure Jason's wife was a great patient advocate—require community meetings hosted by the VA, and establish a joint DOD-VA working group to improve coordination and communication at all levels of government.

In an era where medical research and technological advancements have led to at least a 90-percent survival rate for our wounded soldiers, we must continue to focus on the battles our veterans face when they return home, including treatment of those wounds that are not evidently visible.

One marine in my hometown, Andrew White, returned home to West Virginia after serving in Iraq. Andrew displayed signs of PTSD, including insomnia, nightmares, constant restlessness, and pain related to an injury. In addition to antidepressant and anti-anxiety pills, doctors placed Andrew on a strong antipsychotic drug and, over time, increased his dosage from 25 milligrams to 1600 milligrams—more than twice the dosage recommended to treat schizophrenia. Andrew White died in his sleep at the age of 23.

Andrew is a reminder of the physical and mental side effects of the war. We must work together to provide the resources and care necessary to assist our veterans in their transition into civilian life.

Expansion of the Opioid Safety Initiative and further development of the opioid therapy risk support tool will do just that. These measures will enable the VA to use the patient record database to detect those at higher risk of opioid abuse and submit information to the State prescription drug monitoring programs. We really need all hands on

deck. This real-time tracking of information will enable medical professionals to better diagnose and treat patients.

This legislation calls for more accountability within the VA through internal audits, reports to Congress, and increased information sharing. We cannot allow bureaucracy to get in the way of delivering quality care to veterans, and we must prioritize the efficient delivery of care.

In my home State of West Virginia, the tragic effects of opioid abuse have left families devastated. I have met with other families who lost their loved ones who suffered from PTSD and traumatic brain injury, and I believe more can be done to find solutions.

It is incumbent upon us in a bipartisan way, as my colleague has said, to do right by our veterans. I wish to thank Senator BALDWIN. I have been at committee meeting after committee meeting with her where she has pounded the drum on the importance of this issue and how devastating it is to families across this country. I thank Senator BALDWIN.

Our best is not just the least we can do. It is our duty to those who have served, of whom we have asked so much, to do more than our best, and this bill does that.

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

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

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

DATA BREACH AT OPM

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, earlier today the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, of which I am a member, conducted a hearing on the data security breach at the Office of Personnel Management. I am a member of that subcommittee, and we had several witnesses, including OPM Director Archuleta. Our goal was to learn about the latest data breach that was revealed earlier this month.

I think that in many ways the hearing was useful and in other ways it was inadequate. The hearing once again demonstrated that much more needs to be done to address the ongoing IT management issues which plague so many agencies but in particular OPM.

As our witnesses testified, the recent breach—and really, it is breaches—at OPM was not a resource issue but a management issue. Too often—and I certainly understand that how we appropriate money is important—the excuse is we don't have enough resources.

Today, in my view, it was made clear that this is much more of a management issue than a resource issue.

As Director Archuleta said in her confirmation hearing as well as in today's hearing, IT security was her top priority when she entered the agency in November of 2013. But what has transpired since then has been troubling. She reminded me today that in her confirmation hearing—IT data security was her top priority when she arrived at the agency in late 2013.

Ms. Archuleta highlighted the fact that in March of 2014, OPM detected a sophisticated attack targeting sensitive information. While the hackers didn't get information in that particular instance, this should have been the first alarm to go off that somebody was trying to get access to very sensitive documents.

I will reiterate what I am talking about in this case. This was March of 2014. We are talking about a hack attempt that occurred last year, not the ones that are making the news today. Unfortunately, it happened again a year ago—in June of 2014—when a company that was involved in background checks for the government, U.S. Investigation Services, USIS, suffered a breach impacting as many as 26,000 Federal employee records. It happened again in August of 2014—a third time. So we have March, June, and August. In August of 2014, another company involved in background checks, KeyPoint, was breached, and this time over 48,000 records were stolen.

In both of these contractor breaches, OPM was required to send out notifications to Federal employees who were affected. Clearly OPM knew about these breaches. Now we have learned that the credentials stolen in those original breaches were used to enter the OPM system and this time steal highly sensitive information. The information stolen was Social Security numbers, military records, veteran status, addresses, birth dates, job and pay history, health insurance, life insurance, pension, age, gender, race, and union status. So these three separate examples should have been the stark warning to secure this highly sensitive data.

When I asked the Director today about this topic, she merely pointed to an IT modernization plan that was drafted when she entered the agency about 20 months ago. My question was: Having seen these three attempts to breach the information at OPM, what then occurred at OPM following that which was different to further and better protect information at the Office of Personnel Management? The answer was really about pointing to a plan that was developed when the Director initially arrived at OPM some 20 months ago.

In addition to those three breaches, if those were not warning enough, there were two other important reports which also could have and should have suggested that better management was

needed. In November 2014, the inspector general for OPM released its annual report on Federal information security. That report found that 11 of the 47 major information systems—23 percent—at OPM lacked proper security authorization. In fact, 5 of the 11 systems were in the office of the Chief Information Officer, the person responsible for the agency's data security.

This morning, Ms. Archuleta was proud to claim that the agency had been upgraded to just “significant deficiency” with regard to its IT system, up from “material weakness.” And the inspector general testified this morning that they had offered 29 recommendations in their November report, and to date only 3 of the 29 recommendations had been adopted.

In addition to the inspector general report in November of 2014, in December—the following month—of 2014, the General Accounting Office, or GAO, issued a report highly critical of IT management at OPM. The report identified best practices that OPM should implement to improve IT management. The report found that “OPM's efforts to modernize retirement processing have been plagued by IT management weaknesses”—another indication that OPM desperately needed to address IT management, which our witnesses argue is critical to ensuring agency-wide security.

So my takeaway from this morning's hearing is that all the warning signs were there. OPM was aware of the persistent issues. They knew about breaches to their contractors, and the agency knew they were a target. Yet the only evidence that OPM did anything was a plan that was written in the first 100 days of the new Director's tenure at OPM. Planning is important, but execution matters a lot more.

We still need lots of answers as to what OPM did following those original breaches last year. What security plan did they put in place? Have they identified which information to secure? How did they secure these documents? Were they effective in preventing other attacks? How often did the OPM Director and the CIO, the Chief Information Officer, meet and what were their discussions?

I am encouraged to know that our Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee intends to have another hearing, and this time we will have the opportunity to present it in a secured setting so that no one can indicate that they are incapable of answering the question because of security issues. I look forward to that hearing. However, I will tell my colleagues that it is discouraging to know what I now know, and it is a discouraging time for IT security and the Federal Government.

I hope we can use this as a lesson for other agencies that they need to be vigilant. We face real and serious threats. Inaction by agencies put Federal workers, the American people, and, most importantly, our national security at risk.

In my view, this is important. These hearings matter. The information we are garnering and attempting to garner is important for those who are employees of the Federal Government. They need to know what has transpired so they can better protect themselves. Why are they at risk because of these hacks? Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, we need to know what has transpired here. Processes need to be in place to prevent additional challenges to our information technology, because it is a matter of our national security.

So for the sake of our Federal employees and their well-being but also for the sake of the American citizens and our national security, this is not an issue that we have the opportunity to avoid. Answers need to be forthcoming and decisions need to be made system-wide—not just at OPM but throughout the entire Federal Government—as we work to protect those who work for the Federal Government and as we work to protect American citizens from a national security perspective.

With that, I thank the Chair for the opportunity to address the Senate.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS PARROTT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I, as chairman of the Committee on Finance along with Ranking Member WYDEN, recognize Thomas Parrott, a distinguished executive at the Social Security Administration—or, SSA. Tom is currently the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Legislation and Congressional Affairs at SSA. He is a dedicated public servant who has served his country for more than 40 years.

Tom began his career at SSA in January 1975 as a claims representative in the Midtown Manhattan district office, before being assigned to district offices in Rochester, NY, and later in Redding, CA. He returned to his hometown of Baltimore in 1980 as a policy analyst in the predecessor office of what is currently called the Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs. Since that time, he has been in the same component office at SSA serving as the Associate Commissioner for Legislative Development and Operations, as Acting Deputy Commissioner, and in his current position as the Assistant Deputy Commissioner.

Tom is a 1972 graduate of Denison University in Ohio, and he completed the Federal Executive Institute's Lead-

ership for a Democratic Society program in 2005. He was appointed in 2008, by then-SSA Commissioner Michael Astrue, to the Senior Executive Service.

As testimony to Tom's devotion to public service, prior to joining SSA, he was a VISTA volunteer and a field health inspector in western New York working with migrant farm workers in the potato and apple growing regions of the State.

Sequences of staffers in the Finance Committee have had the pleasure of working with Tom on many issues relating to Social Security during his tenure at SSA. He has always been resourceful, insightful, and forthcoming.

Tom will retire from the Social Security Administration on July 3, 2015. He will be sorely missed by his colleagues and his many friends on the Hill. He will leave behind the numerous individuals he has mentored and encouraged over the years and who will now carry on this work.

Both Ranking Member WYDEN and I feel that it is important that we in Congress recognize those who devote their working lives to improving the lives of others. Career civil servants often do their work in quiet anonymity behind the scenes providing vital service to the American people. They are rarely recognized for their many contributions. Tom Parrott is one of those people. His record of leadership at the Social Security Administration and his commitment to providing the American people with effective and compassionate service is a record of which he can be justly proud.

Ranking Member WYDEN and I wish Tom all the best in his retirement from Federal service and thank him for his many years of dedicated service. Tom will continue in many ways to serve people in his community, and we are all grateful for his efforts. We wish him all the very best in his future endeavors.

3RD ANNIVERSARY OF DACA PROGRAM

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I commemorate the 3-year anniversary of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, commonly referred to as DACA. This program has played a vital role in empowering the Nation's undocumented immigrant youth population.

Many of these young people were brought to the United States at a young age, through no fault of their own, and know no other home or country. They are woven into the fabric of California and this country. At school, they are taught American history, culture, and values. They strive to achieve the American dream.

The DACA Program enables such youth to fulfill their potential and thus to maximize their contribution to their families, communities, and this country. President Obama announced the DACA Program in June 2012 to protect