

say that this protocol could lend itself to unnecessary delay. However, Admiral Neffenger received three votes in less than 3 weeks, first by the Commerce Committee on June 4, 2015, the second one on June 15, 2015, by the Homeland Security Committee, and last night when he was confirmed by a vote of 81 to 1. So the Senate has moved swiftly to confirm this important nomination, in comparison to the time the Obama administration has taken to send the Senate a qualified nominee.

While I am disappointed at the length of time it took for the President to send the Senate a qualified nominee, I applaud the President's selection of Admiral Neffenger to be the next TSA Administrator. Admiral Neffenger has served ably and well for 34 years in the U.S. Coast Guard, rising through the ranks to become the Vice Commandant when the Senate confirmed him last year for that distinguished position.

During an assignment to Mobile, AL, he helped to lead the multi-agency response to the 1993 Amtrak Sunset Limited train derailment into a remote waterway in the Mobile River Delta, which killed 47 people. Admiral Neffenger also has substantial experience serving right here in the Senate, having been a Coast Guard fellow and detailee for 3 years at the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Admiral Neffenger also served as Deputy National Incident Commander for the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. In that role, Admiral Neffenger coordinated and led over 50,000 people from Federal, State, and local agencies, tribal representatives, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector throughout five Gulf Coast States in the clean-up and response effort. Clearly, Admiral Neffenger has the requisite background and experience to lead reforms at the TSA.

Admiral Neffenger has proven himself as a leader, and the TSA is an agency in dire need of strong, capable leadership. In May, the Department of Homeland Security's Inspector General testified in the House of Representatives that, "[u]nfortunately, although nearly 14 years have passed since TSA's inception, we remain deeply concerned about its ability to execute its important mission." Then, earlier this month, news broke that undercover investigators from the Inspector General's office had penetrated TSA security checkpoints while carrying illegal weapons or simulated bombs on 67 of 70 attempts. In other words, TSA failed 95 percent of the time to prevent illegal weapons or simulated bombs from being smuggled through TSA security checkpoints. This is unacceptable, and it is clear that the Inspector General is right to be concerned about TSA's ability to execute its important mission in a rapidly changing threat environment.

TSA has also experienced a number of other troubling failures about which I have written to the agency. I have been concerned about the TSA's over-

sight of Secure Identification Display Area, SIDA, badges at the Nation's airports. In December 2014, it was revealed that a Delta ramp agent in Atlanta allegedly used his SIDA badge to bypass TSA security and facilitate an interstate gun smuggling operation via commercial aircraft. TSA's response to my letter of inquiry about its oversight of SIDA badges stated that TSA does not issue or manage SIDA badges and that this responsibility falls to airport operators—which raised even more concerns about TSA's awareness about lost SIDA badges at our Nation's airports.

Another issue I have raised with TSA relates to the potential security gaps in its PreCheck initiative raised in reports by the inspector general. On January 28, 2015, the inspector general released an unclassified summary of a classified report concluding that PreCheck is a positive step towards risk-based security screening as a concept, but that TSA needs to modify its PreCheck vetting and screening processes and improve its PreCheck communication and coordination. The Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General report also stated that, "TSA did not concur with all recommendations and all recommendations remain open."

In response to the conclusions and recommendations, I wrote to TSA along with Ranking Member NELSON on March 25, 2015, asking a series of questions about potential security gaps in TSA PreCheck. TSA responded to this letter on April 14, 2015, but the issue of potential security gaps in PreCheck and other expedited screening initiatives must still be addressed as TSA seeks to continue these initiatives, let alone expand them.

Admiral Neffenger's proven leadership throughout the course of his service in the U.S. Coast Guard will undoubtedly afford valuable perspective in his role as TSA Administrator. Admiral Neffenger understands the need for TSA to continuously evolve to meet the challenges presented by an ever-changing threat environment. Obviously, the TSA is an agency that needs a strong leader who will bring cultural change to the agency. I am hopeful that Admiral Neffenger can be a leader who can fundamentally reform the TSA. He has a heavy burden, but I believe he is capable of shouldering that burden and I pledge to work with him and my colleagues here in the Senate to see that those changes occur.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### RECOGNIZING ARKANSAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE VOLUNTEERS

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the work of 12 power linemen from nine electric cooperatives in Arkansas for their work to bring reliable electricity to citizens in Guatemala.

The Arkansas linemen dedicated more than 2 weeks to completely change the lives of more than 1,390 residents in 2 villages in rural Guatemala—Jolom I'Jix and Zapotal. Through construction activities such as installation of poles, distribution transformers, household connections, and meters, these volunteers extended the electric distribution system 4 miles, connecting homes to an electric grid powered by a small hydroelectric plant.

Since 2013, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas volunteers have worked to improve the lives of Guatemalans by providing electricity. The significance of this project stretches to impact numerous aspects of daily life for these residents. Electricity is a critical element in improving the quality of life and to providing health care, education, access to clean water, and economic growth. Equipped with this newfound source of electricity, hope for a brighter future exists for subsistence farmers whose main worry is simply providing food for their family.

This effort, funded by participating co-ops and supporters in Arkansas, continues the State's storied history of making an impact. By being a beacon of good for these villagers, the linemen were able to engrave a lasting impact, which will help future generations of Guatemalans.

I offer my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to make a difference for those who are truly in need. Doug Evans, Will Glover, Kyle Metcalf, Andy Caywood, Michael Counts, Andy Ward, Brent Hufstedler, Kirk Kempson, Joey Burk, Kris Rankin, Paul Garrison and Ryan Hayes, thank you for your dedication and service to helping connect citizens of Guatemala to electric service.●

##### RECOGNIZING ALAN LEVIN

• Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise on behalf of the Delaware Delegation to honor the exemplary service of Alan Levin, director of the Delaware Economic Development Office, upon his retirement. Alan became director in January 2009 and continued to serve with distinction in that capacity for 6 years. He assumed that position at a time when tens of thousands of Delawareans were losing their jobs, and the State's top priority was putting them back to work. Throughout this tumultuous time, he has been a tremendous leader and true advocate for the State.

Alan has a lifetime of experience when it comes to knowing what it takes to make a business successful. In 1987, he took over Delaware's home-grown pharmacy chain Happy Harry's, the business his father started, and grew it to become an iconic brand with 76 stores throughout the state. Prior to taking over the family business, he worked for United States Senator Bill Roth as his executive assistant and counsel. He is a graduate of Tulane

University and Widener University Law School.

When Delaware Governor Jack Markell tapped him to head the Delaware Economic Development Office, unemployment in Delaware was soaring. The State's automotive plants were shuttering, and the State's major oil refinery announced plans to idle operations. Alan got straight to work, and over the next 6 years, the Delaware Economic Development Office awarded more than \$213 million in job creation grants and loans to corporations through its strategic fund, and courted big firms such as Amazon, Barclays, Capitol One, JP Morgan Chase, Kraft Foods, Purdue and Sallie Mae to expand its current operations or relocate to Delaware. Alan was also instrumental in reopening the shuttered Delaware City Oil Refinery, putting hundreds of people back to work at one of the State's most significant industrial sites.

Alan has been lauded as a bold risk-taker whose experience and innovative planning has helped Delaware have the fastest job growth in the Mid-Atlantic over the last 2 years. He can also be credited with helping to level the playing field for minority, women, and veteran business owners, as well as those with disabilities. On behalf of Senator CHRIS COONS and Congressman JOHN CARNEY, I wholeheartedly thank Alan Levin for his service to the State of Delaware. His model leadership and dedication has improved the quality of life for countless residents and businesses in our great State. We offer our sincere congratulations on a job well done, and wish him and his wife Ellen, their children Andrew, Daniel and Jason, and their granddaughter Hannah, many happy, healthy and successful years to come.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DETECTIVE CORPORAL MARK W. THALHAMMER

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I wish to honor Mark W. Thalhammer, Pueblo, CO, police detective corporal, and recognize his retirement after 34 years of service to his community and to his country. Detective Thalhammer has served with distinction in a variety of roles for the Pueblo Police Department. During his tenure, Detective Thalhammer has served as a police officer, a criminal investigator, a narcotics enforcement officer assigned to a U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration multiagency drug task force, a gang reinforcement detective, a felon enforcement officer, and a tactical officer assigned to high-risk law enforcement endeavors. His dedication to law enforcement for more than three decades has left an indelible mark on the community, the country, and the Pueblo Police Department.

Please join me in honoring Pueblo Police Department Detective Corporal Thalhammer for his devotion to his community and our State's law enforcement profession. His years of cou-

rageous service and commitment deserve great recognition and admiration.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 644) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate, and agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the title of the bill.

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 160. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2026. A communication from the Regulatory Liaison, Office of Natural Resources Revenue, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Indian Oil Valuation Amendments" (RIN1012-AA15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 17, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2027. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Summary of Benefits and Coverage and Uniform Glossary" (RIN1545-BM53) (TD 9724) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 22, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 1645. An original bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-70).

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BLUNT:

S. 1643. A bill to require a report on actions to secure the safety and security of dissidents housed at Camp Liberty, Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 1644. A bill to permanently extend the private mortgage insurance tax deduction; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 1645. An original bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1646. A bill to amend the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 to make a technical correction relating to the amendments made by Public Law 113-243; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. CARPER):

S. 1647. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways and highway safety construction programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 1648. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to create a sustainable future for rural healthcare; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 1649. A bill to amend the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to designate the Sonoran Corridor connecting Interstate 19 to Interstate 10 south of the Tucson International Airport, as a future part of the Interstate System; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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

S. 1650. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make changes to the Medicare home health face-to-face encounter requirements; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VITTER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. REED, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 1651. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 1652. A bill to designate an existing Federal officer to coordinate efforts to secure the release of United States persons who are hostages of hostile groups or state sponsors of terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 1653. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to enhance access for independent agents and brokers to information regarding marketplace enrollment; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 1654. A bill to prevent deaths occurring from drug overdoses; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

#### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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