

to industry representatives, the cost of complying with regulations absorbs 12 percent of total bank operating expenses, and is two-and-a-half times greater for small banks than for large banks.

The cost of regulation puts community banks at a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis larger banks. Over the past 2 decades, the share of the U.S. banking industry represented by community banks has declined from 40 percent to just 18 percent. Over the same period, the share of the market represented by the five largest banks has grown from roughly 18 percent to 46 percent. I am concerned that unnecessary regulation will accelerate these trends, and ironically, contribute to the further consolidation of the banking industry into a handful of “too big to fail” banks.

Community banks play an essential role in meeting the credit needs of their customers, particularly small businesses, homeowners, and farmers. Although community banks represent just 18 percent of total banking assets, they are responsible for half of our nation’s small business loans. With small business formation at generational lows, it is essential that we preserve and protect their access to credit, as they are the major driver of job creation in our country. In addition, community banks provide ¾ of our Nation’s agricultural loans, a line of finance that requires highly specialized knowledge of farming and a long-term perspective suited to agricultural cycles.

Regulators should be able to tailor their regulations to take the distinctive nature of community banks into account. My bill would allow regulators to exempt community banks from unnecessary and burdensome regulations where it is in the public interest to do so. I urge my colleagues to support it.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

**SA 2257.** Mr. McCAIN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 22, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 2257.** Mr. McCAIN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 22, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies

under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ . REVIEW AND NOTIFICATIONS OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS GRANTED FOR NEXT GENERATION FLIGHT PROCEDURES.**

Section 213(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) NOTIFICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS.—Not less than 30 days before granting a categorical exclusion under this subsection for a new procedure, the Administrator shall notify and consult with the affected public and the operator of the airport at which the procedure would be implemented.

“(4) REVIEW OF CERTAIN CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall review a decision of the Administrator made on or after February 14, 2012, and before the date of the enactment of this paragraph to grant a categorical exclusion under this subsection with respect to a procedure to be implemented at an airport to determine if the implementation of the procedure had a significant effect on the human environment in the community in which the airport is located if the operator of that airport requests such a review and demonstrates that there is good cause to believe that the implementation of the procedure had such an effect.

“(B) CONTENT OF REVIEW.—If, in conducting a review under subparagraph (A) with respect to a procedure implemented at an airport, the Administrator, in consultation with the operator of the airport, determines that implementing the procedure had a significant effect on the human environment in the community in which the airport is located, the Administrator shall—

“(i) consult with the operator of the airport to identify measures to mitigate the effect of the procedure on the human environment; and

“(ii) in conducting such consultations, consider the use of alternative flight paths.”

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

##### COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SR-328A of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Legislative Hearing to Review Pending Forest Service and Forestry Related Bills.”

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

##### COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “The Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress.”

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

##### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Reviewing HealthCare.gov Controls.”

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

##### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Corruption, Global Magnitsky, and Modern Slavery—Review of Human Rights Around the World.”

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

##### COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 11 a.m., in room SD-216 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

##### SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Wildlife Poaching.”

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

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources’ Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 2:45 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2015, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, “Reviewing the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs’ Role in the Regulatory Process.”

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

## ENSURING ACCESS TO CLINICAL TRIALS ACT OF 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 139 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title. The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 139) to permanently allow an exclusion under the Supplemental Security Income program and the Medicaid program for compensation provided to individuals who participate in clinical trials for rare diseases or conditions.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (S. 139) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 139

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Ensuring Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2015”.

**SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF SUNSET PROVISION.**

Effective as if included in the enactment of the Improving Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-255, 124 Stat. 2640), section 3 of that Act is amended by striking subsection (e).

**MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 3038**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3038) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:40 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:04 p.m., adjourned until Friday, July 17, 2015, at 10:40 a.m.

**NOMINATIONS**

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

**NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

JESSIE HILL ROBERSON, OF ALABAMA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2020, VICE JEFFERY MARTIN BARAN, RESIGNED.

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

SUSAN COPPEDGE AMATO, OF GEORGIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE TO MONITOR AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR AT LARGE, VICE LUIS C. DE BACA, RESIGNED.

MARC JONATHAN SIEVERS, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SULTANATE OF OMAN.

KENNETH DAMIAN WARD, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS.

**THE JUDICIARY**

MARK A. YOUNG, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, VICE AUDREY B. COLLINS, RETIRED.

**WITHDRAWAL**

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on July 16, 2015 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

JESSIE HILL ROBERSON, OF ALABAMA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 18, 2018, (RE-APPOINTMENT), WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON FEBRUARY 5, 2015.