

Secretaries of State Kissinger and Schultz.

Let's look at proliferation. Some of us have discussed the obvious proliferation dangers flowing from an agreement that puts Iran on the path of nuclear weapons. Despite the reluctant words of acquiescence that have been wrung out of others in the region, who can possibly argue that Iran now will never be permitted to develop these nuclear weapons technologies without a response from others.

If I were the King of Saudi Arabia, if I were the Prime Minister or the President of any major country in the Middle East, I am not going to stand by and watch Iran achieve nuclear dominance. They are going to take their own action.

We have now basically shredded the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

Let's look at Syria and the impact on Syria. America's appalling lack of effective response to the open wound that is Syria is one example of the paralysis born out of the single-minded obsession accommodating the Iranian regime. Iran is the principal prop for the brutal Syrian regime. Assad could not have remained in power these past 4 years of catastrophic disintegration of his country without Iran's support. I fear our negotiations with Iran have taken on such an overwhelming priority with an administration obsessed with legacy that it helped freeze us into inaction on Syria. The administration claims the nuclear negotiations were about Iran's nuclear misbehavior only and were never intended to address the rest of its regional brutality. That is true in some cases, but careful reading of the annexes and careful reading of the agreement—by doing so, we now know the administration went well beyond just discussing the nuclear capability issue. It did not address the hostages that were being held by the Iranian regime—the Americans. It did not address the ballistic missile development and proliferation. Those are two issues which had nothing to do with the agreement itself, according to the administration.

Negotiations between the Ayatollahs and the Great Satan—that is us, according to the Ayatollah—could not happen in a vacuum. Subjects not addressed by the negotiations nevertheless are affected by them, and our stupefying passivity on Syria proves the case.

Let's look at Russia. Our problems with Russia have only grown and multiplied as we tried to ignore Russian misbehavior during our joint negotiations with Iran. But worse, our obsession with getting a deal has unleashed a Russia-Iran axis. Their new cooperation creates yet another threat to American interests.

Just days after concluding this deal, the commander of Iran's elite Quds Force, General Suleimani, flew to Moscow—which he was sanctioned by the U.N. not to do, but he did anyway—reportedly to convince the Russians to

step in to help shore up the crumbling Assad regime in Syria. It worked. The Russians are now in Syria in force, building barracks and bringing in trainers, tanks, and other heavy weapons. Iran and Russia together are Assad's best friends—maybe his savior.

By ignoring Syria, empowering and enriching Iran, and making Putin's Russia an actual negotiating partner, we have created the perfect storm. This is the price of dealing with the devil.

Lastly, let me speak about Israel because any discussion of consequences must return to what should be the core issue: the consequences for our only and best friend in the Middle East, Israel—the only democratic ally in the region. We cannot ignore the major risks that will follow through with the often-repeated threats of obliterating the State of Israel—a threat repeated by the Supreme Leader in no uncertain terms just this week. Is this hyperbole or posturing as the administration claims? The Israelis don't think so, and I don't think so.

We have to assume that an extremist, violent state such as Iran, after decades of creating, arming, and guiding terrorist organizations devoted to Israel's destruction, will continue their assault one day, now we know, with nuclear weapons. One day, others may look back through the smoke and ashes created by this Iran deal and wonder how we could ever have been so blind. How could we ever have conceded to an agreement that violated every goal that the previous three Presidents and current President said we must not concede on—that is, it is totally unacceptable for Iran to have possession of nuclear weapons capability.

Two Democratic Presidents, two Republican Presidents, over three decades of time, have made that statement. It was the goal of the United States to do everything in its capability to prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon, and we just signed an agreement that gave them the pathway to that nuclear weapon. Does it possibly delay their achievement of that? Yes. But does it reach the goal of preventing them from having it? No.

So after all the shouting and all the efforts and all the debate and all the examination of the agreements, we are told to give up. It is a done deal. The President used his "Executive authority" to deem this an agreement and not a treaty, which is a fallacy in itself. But now we are told we have to give it up. We have to move on. We have other things to do. You made your best effort. We won, you lost.

No, America lost. America lost, and we will be paying a price year after year after year as we watch the flow of money into Iran, the flow of oil out of Iran and money in return, supporting proxy wars throughout the Middle East, igniting a nuclear arms race in that tinder box of the region. We will regret the day—we will regret the day—the announcement was made that we have signed a deal with Iran.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have come to make a unanimous consent request. I was going to tell the body why I was doing that and then make a unanimous consent request. But my colleague and friend from Texas, who is going to object to it, has a plane to catch, so I am going to make the unanimous consent request, let him object, let him explain why he objects, and then I will explain why I was for it. It won't change the thrust of this.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 139, 140, and 141; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and on behalf of Senator GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I would just briefly point out that during President Obama's term of office, the Senate has confirmed more judicial nominees than it had at this point in 2007. Our pace simply follows the standard set by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle established that year. In the Judiciary Committee, we have had more hearings and moved more nominees than we did last year.

In terms of the Executive Calendar, everyone knows that at the end of last year, during the lameduck session, our Democratic friends rammed through 11 Federal judges. Under regular order, these judges should have been considered at the beginning of this Congress. That is what happened in 2006 when 13 nominations were returned to the President. Had we not confirmed in the lameduck 11 judicial nominees during last year, we would roughly be on pace for judicial nominations this year compared to 2007.

So we are working at the usual pace, and on behalf of Chairman GRASSLEY, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I regret my colleague's objection. I hope they will change their minds. But once again I must rise to address the growing crisis of judicial vacancies in our Federal and district courts.

We all know it is the job of the Senate to responsibly keep up with the

need for confirmed judges. Unfortunately, my friends on the other side of the aisle slowed the judicial confirmation process to a crawl. They did their best to slow the pace of confirmation when the Senate was under Democratic leadership and now are sluggishly moving on nominations even more so in the Senate they control. It has resulted in a nearly 10 percent vacancy in judicial positions throughout the United States. There are 31 districts that are considered judicial emergencies, meaning they don't have enough judges to hear the caseload. The longer we wait to move judges through committee and to the floor, the worse the numbers will get.

Let me take the Western District of New York as an example to talk a bit about these vacancies and what they mean in practice. Western New York has the cities of Buffalo and Rochester and the surrounding areas. There is not a single active Federal district judge in the Western Federal District—not one. The district has one of the busiest caseloads in the country. It handles more criminal cases than Washington, DC, or Boston. It is on the Canadian border, making it particularly busy, and yet they don't have a single active Federal judge. The delays for civil trials are by far the worst in the country. It takes 5 years for a median case to go to trial. That is denial of justice, just about. It is un-American. If not for the efforts of two judges on senior status who are volunteering to hear cases in their retirement, the Western District of New York would be at a full standstill.

The lack of judges has real legal consequences. In the Western District of New York, Judge Skretny—on senior status—has admitted that he is encouraging all cases to settle in pretrial mediation in order to lower caseloads. Criminal trials are prioritized while civil trials languish in delay. The two retired judges, who are the only ones reading cases at the moment, are spending far less time on each individual case than they would under normal circumstances. And defendants may be inclined to settle, admit guilt, and take plea deals rather than wait out a lengthy trial process.

As many of my colleagues have said so eloquently, the harsh truth is that for these petitioners, companies, and communities, justice is being delayed and thus denied. And the same story line is playing out in courtrooms throughout the country. This is not how our judicial system is supposed to work, and it should be an easy problem to rectify.

Right now, there are 13 non-controversial judges on the Executive Calendar, and 3 more were reported out of committee today. Of those, three are highly qualified judges from New York, including one from the Western District. I know these nominees. They are brilliant people, experienced jurists, and above all they are moderate. This Senator believes in moderation in the

choosing of judges. Larry Vilardo and Ann Donnelly are two whom I have recommended, and LaShann DeArcy Hall was recommended by a good friend, the junior Senator from New York, Senator GILLIBRAND. They should all be confirmed, but we don't know when they will come up for a vote. All of these nominees exceed my standards for judicial nominees. In his or her own way, each brings excellence, moderation, and diversity to the Federal bench.

They are not the only outstanding nominees we have. We have judges pending from Missouri, California, and several other States—represented by Republican Senators as much as Democrats—which are experiencing the same judicial emergencies and heavy caseloads. These are nominees who have already moved out of committee, all with bipartisan support. I am not offending the traditional committee process by asking simply to move them off the floor and onto the bench where they belong.

I came to the floor last July to request that we move to confirm these nominees. Unfortunately, my request was blocked by my good friend the Senator from Iowa. In response to my request, I was basically told: The nominees are moving along just fine. Be patient.

Well, we are several months later and still we have no indication that these judicial nominees will ever be moved off the Executive Calendar for a vote.

I was told—and I am paraphrasing—that if one would only count all the judges Democrats confirmed at the end of the last Congress, the Republican record on judges wouldn't look so bad. With all due respect to my friend from Iowa, I don't believe he can take credit for our work like that. One cannot slice and dice the numbers to make the Republican record on judicial confirmations any better. Listen to this. The fact is that the Republican leadership has scheduled votes on only six Federal judges this whole Congress—six—less than one a month. There is no reason for that.

Even if we did give Republicans credit for the judges the Democrats approved at the end of last Congress, we would still be far behind the pace of confirmations in the past because by comparison, through the seventh year of President Bush's Presidency where there was a Republican President but Democrats controlled the Senate, 29 judges had been approved—6 compared to 29. How is that parity?

When Democrats controlled the Senate during the final 2 years of George W. Bush's Presidency, we confirmed 68 judges. When Republicans controlled the Senate during the 2 final years of President Clinton's Presidency, we confirmed 73 judges. How many confirmations have there been in these last 2 years when Republicans have controlled the Senate, having a Democratic President? Six. The comparison numbers are 73, 68, 6. Is that equal? Is

that the same as they are always doing, as they say? Of course not.

The Republican majority is confirming judges at the slowest rate in more than 60 years, and as a result, the number of current vacancies has shot up nearly 50 percent and the number of judicial emergencies has increased 158 percent. In no world is that a reasonable pace, as I have been assured by my colleagues.

There are no values more American than the speedy application of justice and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. Frankly, neither of these can be achieved without judges on the bench. The equal and fair application of justice is necessarily tarnished by a courtroom without a judge. It is as simple as that.

So today I moved that we move to New York's pending judicial nominations, but the request was rejected. I hope my colleagues will think this through. It is a blemish on this Congress. It is a blemish on the idea that we are getting things done. It is a blemish when our Republican leader says this Congress is doing things at a better pace than in previous years.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

DR. MICHELLE COLBY AND JONATHAN MCENTEE

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, literally every month of this year, I have come to the Senate floor to do something that one of our former colleagues, Ted Kaufman, who served as our Senator for 2 years after JOE BIDEN became Vice President—Ted used to come to the floor not on a monthly basis but even more frequently than that to talk about what was being done by any number of Federal employees across our country, to draw attention to the fact that these are not nameless, faceless bureaucrats, these are people who do important work for each of us in a variety of ways.

What I have tried to do in the last several months—I think most of this year—is to come to the floor to recognize the work not of the Federal employees at large but the work of a few of the many exemplary Department of Homeland Security employees and to thank them for their dedication to their mission and their service to our Nation, which is an important one. And the reason I have particular interest in this is that I have been the senior Democrat on homeland security the last couple of years, and I worked with Tom Coburn of Oklahoma. The two of us were privileged to lead the committee.

In June I spoke about several outstanding officers in the U.S. Coast

Guard, one of them a petty officer, a woman named Joscelyn Greenwell, who is stationed at Coast Guard Station Indian River Inlet in southern Delaware, which is just a little bit north of Bethany Beach and just south of Rehoboth. In July I had the opportunity to actually visit Petty Officer Greenwell and 30 of her colleagues to learn more about how she and her unit serve and how they protect the rest of us. It is not just Delawareans who seek recreation—fish, boat, and swim—in the inland bays in Delaware or in the Atlantic ocean; people from all over the country and actually all over the world do that, and we are grateful.

But the devotion of Petty Officer Greenwell and her colleagues to their mission is shared by thousands of men and women serving with the U.S. Coast Guard and throughout the Department of Homeland Security. The Coast Guard used to be part of Treasury, as I recall, but today it is, since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, part of DHS.

Well, today I want to just take just a few minutes to recognize the service of and say thanks to two other exemplary public servants who work at the Department of Homeland Security, not in the Coast Guard, but in this case, in the Science and Technology Directorate. While many at the Department of Homeland Security put their lives on the line along our borders, at our ports of entry, and our airports or in response to disasters, some are working behind the scenes to secure our homeland against new threats or better respond to those we face today.

This is what happens every day at the Science and Technology Directorate. They give their all to provide frontline personnel the best tools and tactics that are available. Essentially, the role of the Department's Science and Technology employees is to keep our homeland security efforts a step ahead of the ever-evolving threats we face as a nation. They do this through state-of-the-art research and development issues performed by some of our Nation's top engineers, top scientists, top researchers.

The product of their work is deployed across the Department. From cyber security, to biological defense, to border security, Science and Technology's research, development, and science work is truly vital to all of us. Science and Technology employees work closely with the trade and travel industry and with many academic groups as well. They also work closely with other research and scientific agencies across all levels of government to meet the needs of first responders, to enhance strategy and analysis, and to bolster operations and capability.

Among the threats that science and technology seeks to address are the threats to our agricultural system. Agriculture is, of course, vital to our Nation's economic stability and our security. In Delaware, agriculture remains one of the key industries at the heart

of the State's economic activity. I think of Delaware as a three- or four-legged stool—at least our economy sits on a three- or four-legged stool.

One of the strong legs, in Southern Delaware especially, is agriculture. In Sussex County Delaware, we produce more chickens than any county in America. In Sussex County, Delaware—we only have three counties. The biggest—Sussex County is the third largest county in Delaware, but they produce more chickens in Sussex County than any county in America. We raise more soybeans in Sussex County, Delaware, and we feed it to the chickens, along with corn and other things. But biological and manmade threats to our food, whether it is poultry, avian influenza, and so forth, whether manmade threats to our food or animal agriculture system could have devastating impacts to our economy and to our day-to-day lives. It certainly poses a great threat to the Delmarva Peninsula and other places where we raise poultry—and turkeys for that matter. That is why the Department of Homeland Security has a number of employees at Science and Technology whose mission is to prevent and protect against threats to our agricultural infrastructure. In July, I held a hearing, alongside my colleague, Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee Chairman RON JOHNSON of Wisconsin. We held the hearing to examine the threat that avian influenza poses to public health and also to our poultry industry.

In recent months, parts of the poultry industry across our country have been grappling with the devastating outbreak of avian influenza. Although the spread of this disease has slowed, and most of the areas that were affected were in the central part of our country, including Wisconsin, including Iowa, many States have lost millions of chickens and turkeys to this disease. As a result, the economic losses our farmers and businesses are dealing with in those parts of the country are staggering.

The Presiding Officer probably does not know this—maybe he does—but there are roughly 300 chickens for every person in Delaware, as I said. I mentioned we raise more chickens in Sussex County than any county in America, but our poultry farmers create—ready for this—more than \$2.7 billion in State economic activity each year and account for about 70 percent of our State's agricultural exports. We have cows we milk, dairy cattle, we have pigs, we raise a lot of lima beans and that kind of thing, but poultry is the 800-pound gorilla in the room in our economy.

Luckily for our poultry farmers in the Delmarva Peninsula and across the country, public servants like Dr. Michelle Colby are working at the Department of Homeland Security on cutting-edge research to protect against potential disease outbreaks like the avian influenza, the avian flu.

Here she is right now, Dr. Michelle Colby. I will talk a little bit about Michelle, if I may. She is the Branch Chief of Agriculture Defense at the Science and Technology Directorate. Her mission is to develop tools, including vaccines and diagnostics, to prevent livestock from natural and manmade disease threats. Michelle works closely with the Department of Agriculture to help develop and support research projects, track their progress, and stay ahead of existing and emerging threats.

She has also the critically important responsibility of making sure research and development programs across our Federal Government are well coordinated, not duplicated, and always ready to respond to disease outbreaks. A primary part of this woman's job is to make sure Science and Technology, where she works within DHS, uses the lessons learned from previous disease outbreaks to inform research and prevent or better control future outbreaks.

In fact, information gathered during the last few years as part of another project at Science and Technology is currently being used by Michelle's team to help the Department of Agriculture in its response to the avian influenza outbreak I just mentioned. Michelle and her team were also instrumental in helping combat another recent threat to our Nation's agricultural industry and to us, foot-and-mouth disease.

In May of 2012, they secured a conditional license to a Department of Homeland Security foot-and-mouth disease vaccine for use in cattle. This was the first foot-and-mouth disease vaccine ever licensed in the United States—ever licensed in the United States. The conditional license was renewed in May of last year and is now valid through I think May of next year. Michelle and her team's important work did not go unnoticed. They were finalists for the Partnership for Public Service to America Medal for their efforts.

According to her colleagues, Michelle is “one of the most respected scientists in the area of Veterinary Science.” Her colleagues tell me she never loses sight of her critical mission and that she is a dedicated public servant of the highest integrity. Michelle earned her bachelor of science degree in animal science from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. That is on the Delmarva Peninsula. She is our neighbor just to the south of us. She has also a doctor of veterinary medicine degree from Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. She also has a master of science in epidemiology from the University of Maryland College Park.

Interestingly enough, her graduate work focused on the Delmarva poultry industry. While some of the important work at—let me just say: Michelle, thank you for what you do, not just for Delmarva, not just for those who are

involved in the poultry industry but thank you for what you do for our country and all of us who, frankly, enjoy eating poultry and for all of us who are involved in exporting and selling poultry around the world.

It used to be that 1 out of every 100 chickens we raised in America we exported, then it was 5 out of 100, 10 out of 100, and now it is 20 out of 100. We are negotiating a new transpacific trade partnership with 11 other countries that will encompass about 40 percent of the world's markets. We want to make sure on Delmarva, and frankly in a lot of other places around this country, that we can use this trade agreement to sell that which we are really good at; that is, raising chickens.

While some of the important work at Science and Technology happens in the lab, some scientists and engineers there team up with other agencies within the Department of Homeland Security to get a firsthand look at how to enhance capabilities and operations on the frontlines. For Jonathan McEntee—known as Jon—Jon's Science and Technology work has taken him into the field of joint missions with the Coast Guard, with Customs and Border Protection, and with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Public service is nothing new to Jon. In fact, it runs in his family. Jon was born on a U.S. Air Force base, not in Dover, DE, but in the United Kingdom of all places, in a place called Lakenheath, United Kingdom. He is the proud son of a retired linguist and the grandson of a 50-year GE chemical engineer and World War II veteran. He continues his family's history of service to our country today through his work ensuring the security and economic prosperity of the United States in his role at Science and Technology.

Since 2007, the last several years, Jon has worked at the Borders and Maritime Security Division at Science and Technology within the Department of Homeland Security. It is called Security Advanced Research Projects Agency. This component is responsible for the research, for the development, for the testing and evaluation needs for the Department's land borders, ports of entry, and maritime mission environments.

Since becoming the division's Deputy Director in 2011, Jon has managed several projects, developing maritime, border, and cargo security initiatives. He is responsible for managing the congressional, financial, and technical oversight of operations, along with its 30 employees. On any given day, Jon is juggling 40 projects on a wide range of activities all across the Department.

According to his colleagues, Jon believes technology is the key to remaining competitive and relevant in an ever-changing global environment. So it is no surprise that he helped establish the technology innovation center within the Coast Guard, to help deliver

technical capabilities for the Department's operators in a faster and more efficient process. Jon also helps in the efforts to build a more cohesive and unified Department of Homeland Security. They have a saying over there, "One DHS." He is part of that.

He regularly represents Science and Technology on Department-level projects to help improve coordination and make the best use of science resources. Efforts like Jon's are supporting Secretary Jeh Johnson's Unity of Effort Initiative, an effort to help the Department operate more efficiently and effectively. That is something I think we can all get behind.

Colleagues say that Jon looks at solutions to problems not only from a security aspect but also while thinking about how they impact the overall economic interest of our country. He believes all solutions must have a positive return on investment over existing methods and practices. Jon is well known for his let's-find-a-way attitude and always encourages his colleagues to be a part of the solution rather than add to the problem. I like to say: "No" means find another way.

The work ethic he embodies and his leadership can be credited for his work building partnerships to promote our Nation's economic growth. Specifically, he helped facilitate a partnership that included Customs and Border Protection, Mexican and Canadian Customs, General Motors, the Ford Motor Company, Honda Manufacturing, Pacific Union, and Ferromex Rail to successfully conduct a cargo security technology demonstration that operates four U.S.-bound supply chain routes originating from Mexico and originating from Canada.

That achievement earned him wide praise, including the Department of Homeland Security and Technology Under Secretary's Award in 2014. Jon earned his master's in business administration from Salisbury University and a bachelor of science degree in finance from Frostburg State University. He and his wife Heather, an Air Force veteran, have three children: Sage, Myra, and Jack.

I just want to say to Sage, Myra and Jack: Thank you for sharing not just your mom but your dad as well with the people of our country. Thank you.

The efforts of Michelle and Jon provide just a glimpse into the important work being done by hundreds of thousands of individuals across the Department of Homeland Security every single day. These men and women are dedicated. They are exemplary public servants. They are unsung heroes who walk among us every day. More often than not, their good work goes unnoticed—not today. These are not nameless, faceless bureaucrats. These are people with great educations, a great desire to serve our country, and who every day make a difference for us in this country with the work they do.

Michelle and Jon, right here—Jon, thank you. For Michelle, whose picture

was up here just a moment ago, we want to thank you for what you do. We want to thank as well the 200,000 men and women you work with at the Department of Homeland Security. We are a safer country because of your service and I think we are a better country too. As we say in the Navy when people do especially good work, we say two words: One of them is "Bravo" and the other is "Zulu." So, Michelle and Jon, Bravo Zulu. God bless you.

JOB CREATION

Mr. President, if you will bear with me, I wish to talk for a little bit about another important issue, if I could, and I don't see anybody else on the floor, so I will forge ahead.

I actually said this earlier today when we were having a discussion on the Iran agreement, but it bears repeating. When I go back to the elections of last November, I have three messages that are takeaways that I continue to come back to.

The first takeaway for me last November was this: The American people are sending us a message. They said they want us to work together. The second message is they want us to get stuff done, things that we need to get done for the good of our country, and they especially want us to get things done that will help strengthen our economic recovery.

On the good-news side, the Department of Labor reported today that the number of people who filed for unemployment insurance this past week—this number comes out of the Department of Labor every Thursday that is not a Federal holiday, and they have been doing this for years. The week Barack Obama and JOE BIDEN were inaugurated as President and Vice President—that week in January of 2009—628,000 people filed for unemployment insurance. Anytime that number is over 400,000 people filing for unemployment insurance in a week, we are losing jobs.

At the beginning of 2009, we were losing a lot of jobs. We lost 2.5 million jobs in this country in the last 6 months of 2008. We lost 2.5 million more jobs in this country in the first 6 months of 2009. And as we went through 2009, that number—628,000 people filing for unemployment insurance every week—frankly didn't come down a lot. After a year or so, it began to trend down. Finally, it went down to 600,000, eventually to 500,000, and finally it dipped below 500,000 after a couple of years. Several years ago, that number came down to 400,000.

The reason 400,000 is an important number in terms of people filing for unemployment insurance is when that number drops on a weekly basis below 400,000, we are starting to add jobs back—or at least our economy is. For the last 28 straight weeks, the number of folks filing for unemployment insurance in this country has been under 300,000. One of the reasons we are adding, in most months, 200,000 to 250,000 is

because not nearly as many people are losing their jobs, and that is a very good thing.

Even though the economy is arguably better than it was—I think the unemployment rate in this country in January of 2009 was heading toward 10 percent. The unemployment rate today is closer to 5 percent. Is that too high? Sure it is. Can we do better than that? We have to do better than that.

So one of the things I always focus on is trying to figure out how we—when I was Governor of Delaware and chairman of the National Governors Association, I always was interested in how we could create a more nurturing environment for job creation and job preservation. In the 8 years I was privileged to be Governor of Delaware, I am told that more jobs were created in those 8 years than any year maybe in Delaware history—any 8-year period in Delaware history. I didn't create a one of them. Governors don't create jobs. Mayors don't create jobs. Senators—however good we are—don't create jobs. Presidents don't create job. What we do is help create a nurturing environment for job creation.

What does that include? Access to capital. People starting businesses usually have to raise money. A world-class workforce with the kinds of skills that will help businesses be successful. Transportation to move people and business services where they need to go and when they need to go. Public safety. Reasonably priced energy. Reasonably priced health care. You name it. A lot of things go into creating a nurturing environment for job creation and job preservation.

(The remarks of Mr. CARPER pertaining to the introduction of S. 2051 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Still seeing no one else on 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. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

POPE FRANCIS'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, last year I had the opportunity to travel to the Vatican. During my visit, I had the chance to overlook St. Peter's Square from a Vatican balcony. As I took in the view of that historic square, the Sun glinted off the future. Across the square, I saw the rooftop of Pope Paul VI Audience Hall on the Vatican grounds covered with solar panels. It was clear from that view that the Vatican takes climate change very seriously and had long been preparing to have a profound impact on this generational issue that touches every living creature on the planet.

I was at the Vatican as the only U.S. representative in a group of high-level

legislators from around the world who are all working to address climate change in their own countries. We met with Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Cardinal Peter Turkson, the Vatican leaders responsible for writing the initial draft of Pope Francis's historical environmental encyclical, and shared the impact of climate change in our own home countries with the two cardinals who were going to be writing that encyclical.

The conversation then turned to what was happening in the countries of the legislators who were visiting. The lawmaker from the Philippines discussed the destruction that Typhoon Haiyan brought to parts of her country. Legislators from South Africa and Mexico shared the challenges their countries and regions face from drought. The representatives from Europe pointed to the damage from extreme heat waves and rainfall. I relayed my concern with the rising levels, temperature, and acidity of the ocean and the impacts on coastal communities. Rising sea levels are eroding our shores in Massachusetts and New England and across our country, increasing the damage in New England of nor'easters. In recent years, ocean temperatures in our part of the Atlantic ocean have been the hottest ever recorded. In one case, off of Cape Cod, it was 21 degrees warmer than normal this January, in Massachusetts, off of our coastline.

But all of us who had gathered at the Vatican were in agreement that the world's poorest people are suffering the worst consequences of climate change—extreme poverty, famine, disease, and displacement—which is why it should be no surprise that Pope Francis, a Jesuit trained in chemistry who is devoted to the poor and ensuring a just and better future for all mankind, would be the only Pope to devote an entire encyclical to humanity's relationship with the environment. In releasing his encyclical and giving us his message to protect what he calls "our common home," Pope Francis has also given us a common goal: We must act now to stop climate change. But make no mistake—this Pope is looking for leadership. Pope Francis is looking for results. He is looking for all of us to lead to solve this problem.

Next week, we will have the honor of hosting Pope Francis here in Washington, DC, and hearing him address a joint meeting of the United States House of Representatives and the Senate—unprecedented—and the entire Nation will be watching the Pope as he speaks because we all need to hear Pope Francis's message of love, of compassion, of justice and action. And we need to join in the conversation he is calling the world to engage in about protecting people and our planet.

The science of climate change has been clear for decades. Global temperatures are warming, glaciers are melting, and sea levels are rising. Extreme downpours and weather events are in-

creasing. The ocean is becoming more dangerously acidic. Last year was the warmest year ever recorded. Today, NOAA announced that this summer was the hottest summer since 1880. Increasing temperatures increase the risk for bad air days, in turn increasing the risk of asthma attacks and worse for people who actually have lung disease. Global warming is also a public health crisis.

The economic and security costs are now dangerously evident. Climate change is aggravating tensions around the world, especially where food and water security are at the heart of the conflicts. It is spawning new crises that are displacing millions of people and creating an era of refugees. This will require action by our diplomats and aid organizations, but every nation must do its fair share.

Pope Francis's address to Congress next week will offer us the opportunity to examine our own policies, their impact on not only the people of our Nation but on the entire planet, and our duty as leaders and as human beings to take action.

Pope Francis has brought this moral imperative to act on climate change just as the nations of the world are working to forge an international agreement in Paris this December as the world gathers to deal with this issue. The United States must lead this effort. The United States must heed the message of Pope Francis. The United States must be the nation in Paris in December saying to the rest of the world that we can and must do something to solve this problem.

We know that clean energy will be at the heart of meeting any of the goals which we have to establish here and across the planet in order to cut pollution. We must continue to improve the fuel efficiency of the automobiles and trucks we drive here in the United States. We must deploy more wind and solar energy and renew tax breaks for those projects.

By making a commitment to reduce the pollution imperiling our planet, we can engage in job creation that is good for all of creation. The United States can be the leader in the technological revolution to reduce the pollution imperiling our planet, and then we can partner with other nations to share this technology and protect the most vulnerable around the world.

Pope Francis said in his encyclical, "Today, in the view of the common good, there is an urgent need for politics and economics to enter into a frank dialogue in the service of life, especially life." We know that to agree on a course of action is no easy task in this Chamber, but if we harness the ambition of the Moon landing, the technological power of our workers, and the moral imperative of Pope Francis's message, we can leave the world a better place than we found it. We have done it before. We have the tools to do it again. Now we need to forge the political will in order to accomplish those goals.

We need more solar, we need more wind, and we need the batteries for the vehicles we drive in order to reduce the amount of polluting fossil fuels we send up into the atmosphere. We need to invest. We need to be the technological giants. We need to unleash the same kind of revolution in the energy sector as we did in the telecommunications sector in the 1990s. No one on the planet except the United States had a device like this on their person just 15 years ago. We invented telecommunications. We invented the way in which people not just here in America but all across the planet—Africa, Asia, South America—communicate with these wireless devices. We can do the same thing on energy. We can do the same thing with wind and solar. We can reinvent the kinds of vehicles we drive—cars, trucks, buses. We can do it. We have to have the will. We have to listen to the Pope. We have to play the role that the United States is expected to lead by the rest of the world in order to meet this moral imperative. And we can do it by creating millions of new jobs here in the United States. So that is our challenge.

The Pope is arriving next week. For me, as a boy who grew up going to the Immaculate Conception Grammar School, Malden Catholic, Boston College, and Boston College Law School—Catholic school every day for 19 years—this is just an incredible thrill, knowing that, in a way, when he is standing up on that podium, it is going to be a latter-day “Sermon on the Mount” that he delivers to us telling us what our job is today: to save this beautiful planet God has created while also avoiding the worst consequences for the poorest people on the planet if we do not solve the problem.

Let’s work together in a bipartisan fashion in order to heed the message of Pope Francis.

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

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

PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 230, H.R. 36.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 230, H.R. 36, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect pain-capable unborn children, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 230, H.R. 36, to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect pain-capable unborn children, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Joni Ernst, Mike Lee, Mike Rounds, Chuck Grassley, Tim Scott, Patrick J. Toomey, John Boozman, David Perdue, Johnny Isakson, James M. Inhofe, James E. Risch, Steve Daines, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, James Lankford.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL C. MCGOWAN TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF DELAWARE

NOMINATION OF SIM FARAR TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

NOMINATION OF SIM FARAR TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM JOSEPH HYBL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM JOSEPH HYBL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 248, 301, 302, 303, and 304; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that following disposition of the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Michael

C. McGowan, of Delaware, to be United States Marshal for the District of Delaware, for the term of four years; Sim Farar, of California, to be a Member of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2015; Sim Farar, of California, to be a Member of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2018; William Joseph Hybl, of Colorado, to be a Member of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2015; and William Joseph Hybl, of Colorado, to be a Member of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2018?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF PASTOR CLINTON HOUSE AND DR. MARY L. HOUSE’S PASTORAL SERVICE WITH MOUNTAINTOP FAITH MINISTRIES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Pastor Clinton House and Dr. Mary L. House and their 25 years of pastoral service with Mountaintop Faith Ministries.

Pastor Clinton House and Dr. Mary House began their ministry work at a small church in North Las Vegas with 13 members. Over the years, Mountaintop Faith Ministries outgrew its humble beginnings. In 1993, the church’s congregation grew so much they had to open the doors of the church and put chairs in the lobby and out to the street. The church continued to grow, and eventually, they began holding services in the auditorium of Durango High School to accommodate churchgoers. Today, Mountaintop Faith Ministries has a church complex and upwards of 3,500 members.

Mountaintop Faith Ministries has continuously given back to the Las Vegas community. The Sunday services have provided spiritual guidance for thousands, and the church also offers midweek Bible classes and business fairs, where owners can share their businesses with church members following services. One Resurrection Sunday, they held a “dress down” Sunday on the football field at Durango High School. This community event brought buses of homeless to worship