

the House will draft and vote on that type of legislation soon.

The recent executions of the Japanese and Jordanian hostages by the terrorist group ISIL and the attacks in Paris, Ottawa, and Australia serve as reminders of the very real threat we face.

Each day we delay in providing adequate, reliable resources to the Department of Homeland Security, we undermine the Department's efforts to defend the home front. That is why I am calling on my colleagues to take up and pass a clean bill.

My colleagues on the Appropriations Committee Senator SHAHEEN and Vice Chairwoman MIKULSKI have introduced a clean DHS funding bill that reflects the bipartisan agreement reached between the House and Senate appropriators. This bill funds a wide range of programs that keep Americans safe and secure.

For example, the clean version of this bill funds a host of counterterrorism, intelligence, and security functions; investments in cyber security defense technologies and personnel, investments to detect and protect against biological threats, research and development of nuclear detection technologies, TSA and Coast Guard operations to keep our skies and our waters safe. The clean version also funds \$6 billion in disaster funds to help States, localities, businesses, and individuals rebuild after a natural disaster, staffing nearly 24,000 Customs and Border Protection officers who ensure legitimate travel of individuals who seek to enter the country, and staffing 20,000 Border Patrol agents who protect the 6,000 miles of our land border and 2,000 miles of coastal waters.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Johnson has been clear that while the Department operates under the current CR, it cannot fund key homeland security initiatives.

A short-term CR would prevent the Department from awarding new disaster preparedness grants that support our local emergency responders. It would delay the hiring of more investigators for cases related to human trafficking and smuggling. It would also prevent the Secret Service from training for the next Presidential election, and the list goes on.

We cannot expect DHS to do long-term strategic planning with short-term funding measures. The Department needs reliable funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

The House majority is unfortunately playing politics with our homeland security because the President has taken an action that every President since the 1950s has taken: He has provided commonsense direction to our immigration enforcement efforts.

The President's Executive actions on immigration are fundamentally aimed at keeping families together, making our communities safer, and using our resources efficiently. It is hard to understand how someone could oppose that.

The President's actions will ensure that our immigration enforcement efforts are used to secure the border, prevent threats to national security, and protect public safety. These should be our top priorities, and I support those efforts, but if Members of the House take issue with them, they should draft and adopt immigration reform, just as the Senate did on a bipartisan basis 18 months ago.

Our path forward is simple: Pass a clean funding bill. If my colleagues want to fix our broken immigration system, then let's take up a bill, but let's not use this critical funding bill to play partisan politics.

The dedicated men and women of the Department of Homeland Security deserve better. The American people deserve better. Let's put aside politics and let's pass a clean Department of Homeland Security funding bill.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. ALEXANDER pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 67 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECOGNIZING THE HENRY CLAY CENTER FOR STATESMANSHIP AND THE KENTUCKY DISTILLERS' ASSOCIATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last night I had the honor of speaking at a bourbon event hosted by the Henry Clay Center for Statesmanship and the Kentucky Distillers' Association here in Washington, DC. This event was for Kentuckians and by Kentuckians and featured the so-called "Bourbon Barrel of Compromise" that had been delivered from Ashland, the Henry Clay Estate in Lexington, KY. I would ask that my remarks at that event last night be entered into the RECORD.

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

[Feb. 3, 2015]

LEADER MCCONNELL'S REMARKS AT BOURBON EVENT

Thank you, Robert [Clay, co-chairman of the Henry Clay Center for Statesmanship].

It's a pleasure to be here to celebrate the spirit of Kentucky—literally. Tonight we honor two of Kentucky's most important gifts to the nation: the drink that is Bourbon whiskey and the revered statesman Henry Clay. I'm glad to be here to talk about both.

There are a lot of good Henry Clay stories, but let me share one of my favorites—a story that demonstrates Clay's sense of humor and quick wit.

On one occasion, a long-winded colleague of Clay's, Alexander Smyth of Virginia, was giving a speech. He turned to Clay in mid-speech and said disdainfully, "You, sir, speak

for the present generation; but I speak for posterity."

Without batting an eye, Clay retorted, "Yes, and you seem resolved to speak until the arrival of your audience."

Taking that wisdom to heart, I will be brief.

I want to thank the Henry Clay Center for Statesmanship and the Kentucky Distillers' Association for hosting this grand event—not only tonight's affair, but shipping a barrel of Bourbon whiskey from Henry Clay's estate in Ashland to Washington, DC, just as the Great Compromiser reportedly often did some two centuries ago.

The history of Bourbon whiskey and the legend of Henry Clay have long been intertwined. It is said that whenever Clay went to Washington, he carried a barrel with him, to "lubricate the wheels of government."

Clay is also credited with writing the first historical recipe for the mint julep and introducing it to the public in this very hotel.

He recorded in his diary his own method for making the cocktail. Clay called for "mellow bourbon, aged in oaken barrels" and also instructed that "the mint leaves, fresh and tender, should be pressed against a coin-silver goblet with the back of a silver spoon."

The historical record also shows that Clay used Bourbon as an aid to legislating. One observer from that era recalls witnessing Clay and fellow Senate great John Calhoun sipping whiskey in the Old Senate Chamber.

Together they would drain their glasses behind the vice president's chair—and Clay, with good humor, would say to Calhoun, "Well, Mr. Senator, I will admit that you have had the better of me today; but I'll be your match tomorrow."

Legend also holds that Clay's oratorical skills were often enhanced by his consumption of Kentucky's favorite beverage. Some have said that it is the lime in the water used to make Kentucky Bourbon that lends both Bourbon whiskey and Clay's oratory their special flare.

Whatever it may be that gives Bourbon whiskey its unique taste, Kentucky is proud to be the birthplace of Bourbon.

The drink itself is named for Bourbon County, where the product first emerged. Kentucky produces 95 percent of the world's Bourbon supply, and Kentucky's iconic Bourbon brands ship more than 30 million gallons of the spirit to 126 countries, making Bourbon the largest export category among all United States distilled spirits.

Bourbon also gives much back to Kentucky. It is a vital part of the state's tourism and economy. Many a visitor to the Commonwealth has traced the famous Kentucky Bourbon Trail. And the industry is responsible for nearly 10,000 jobs in our state.

And both Bourbon and Clay have one thing in common: They excel at bringing people together in a spirit of compromise.

I'd like to think that this Kentucky spirit of compromise lives on in the Senate today. With the new Senate of the 114th Congress, it's great to see some real debate on the floor of the Senate once again.

It's been great to see both sides able to offer amendments once more.

I know many of the Democratic Senators are glad to be able to give more of a voice to their constituents too. I believe they welcome our vision of a Senate where we're doing some real legislating.

A more open Senate presents more opportunities for legislators with serious ideas to make a mark on the legislative process. It can give members of both parties a real stake in the outcome. And it helps lead, I hope, to greater bipartisan accomplishments down the road.

Just because we have a Republican Congress and a Democrat in the White House

doesn't mean we can't deliver for the American people. On the contrary—divided government has frequently been a time to get big things done. That's something Henry Clay would have well understood and appreciated.

Because principled compromise across party lines was very familiar to Henry Clay.

Three times in the early years of the American Republic, the split between North and South threatened to tear the country apart. And three times before the Civil War finally began, Henry Clay kept the nation together, through compromise and negotiation.

Were it not for his leadership, America as we know it may not exist today.

The Henry Clay Center for Statesmanship rightly keeps his spirit of compromise alive today through its education programs for high school and college students. The Center teaches Kentucky's future leaders about Henry Clay and the art of meaningful dialogue and discourse.

It makes me proud as a Kentuckian to see Henry Clay's legacy live on, whether it is through the Clay Center, through the U.S. Senate, or through all of us here today.

It makes me proud as a Kentuckian to see the imprint the Bluegrass State has made on the history of this country. Not only Clay, but famous Kentuckians like Abraham Lincoln, John Sherman Cooper, Alben Barkley, and the recently departed Wendell Ford.

And it makes me proud as a Kentuckian to see how many other Kentucky traditions have made a lasting imprint on our country. Not least of which is the Run for the Roses on the first Saturday of every May.

So thank you for allowing me to be here tonight. And thank you for taking the spirit of Kentucky with you wherever you go.

Good night.

LESSONS FROM THE EBOLA EPIDEMIC

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, not long ago Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, the World Health Organization, WHO, and the United Nations, and the United States, Great Britain, France, and other countries were frantically trying to bring the Ebola crisis in West Africa under control.

Thousands of people died due to a disastrous failure by WHO's Africa regional representative, serious miscalculations by local officials and global health experts, and a myriad of other problems ranging from weak local health systems that were quickly overwhelmed to a lack of accurate information and cultural practices that helped spread the disease rather than contain it.

But in the past few weeks there has been some good news about progress in stopping Ebola. According to WHO, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea recorded their lowest weekly numbers of new cases in months. The United Nations special envoy on Ebola stated that the epidemic appears to be slowing down, and the Government of Liberia has set a target of zero new Ebola cases by the end of February.

It is heartening to see that the hard work by Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and the international community are bringing results. But we are not out of the woods yet and there are important lessons to be learned from the mistakes

and lost opportunities in the early response to this disease outbreak.

Ebola pushed governments, international organizations, and the private sector and health care responders into unknown territory, forcing everyone to think and act in new ways. Unfortunately, with the exception of the nongovernmental organization Doctors Without Borders, we were all too slow to recognize this. The initial response missed key opportunities to prevent the crisis from becoming an epidemic, and as a result thousands of people died who might have avoided infection. The symptoms of the initial victims were not recognized as Ebola, signs that the epidemic was spreading rather than receding, as some believed, were misinterpreted, and governments and international organizations did not effectively communicate or coordinate with local communities impacted by the virus, nor were the necessary resources to combat the disease available in-country early enough.

As work was done to overcome these missteps and challenges, the epidemic spread further across borders, as did rumors, and fear increased, people in the affected areas became increasingly distrustful of those who were trying to help, and already scarce health care workers became harder to recruit.

The consequences of not containing the disease in the early stages have been catastrophic. As of January 28, WHO estimates that 8,795 people have died from the Ebola virus, and according to UNICEF's preliminary estimates, as of December 29 at least 3,700 children in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone have lost one or both parents to the disease. The children of those countries have not attended school since mid-2014. While Guinea reopened their schools in mid-January, attendance has remained low. Liberia is preparing to reopen schools in mid-February, and Sierra Leone hopes to reopen its schools by the end of March.

Unemployment and business closures have increased, cross-border trade has plummeted, and there are concerns that food shortages and malnutrition will increase because food stock that would normally be kept for next year is already being eaten.

According to the World Bank's December estimates, the growth in GDP in 2014 for Liberia and Sierra Leone fell by over 60 percent in each country and Guinea's GDP growth in 2014 is down by 89 percent.

Much of our investments in the rebuilding of Liberia and Sierra Leone since the civil wars there have been obliterated by Ebola. These countries are back at square one.

The world's initial response to the Ebola crisis illustrates how unprepared we are for future global health crises which may be far more devastating and fast spreading than Ebola, if that is possible to imagine.

How can we avoid repeating our mistakes? Are we going to provide our own government agencies such as the Cen-

ters for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Agency for International Development and international organizations such as WHO the resources they need? Can we count on them to take the steps to ensure that the right people are in the right places with the authority to make the necessary decisions in a timely manner?

Too often it seems that we have to relearn the same lessons each time for different situations and countries. There are already reports, including a January 19 article in the Washington Post that describes newly built Ebola response centers, paid for by the United States Government, that stand empty or have closed because the number of new Ebola cases has dropped sharply. It is far better to be prepared than unprepared, but we need to reassess the situation and be sure that we are adjusting our response appropriately.

The fiscal year 2015 Consolidated Appropriations Act includes \$2.5 billion for the Department of State and USAID response to the Ebola crisis. As ranking member of the appropriations subcommittee that funds those agencies, I hope they will ensure that we use these funds to avoid past mistakes, by improving flexibility to respond to the crisis as it changes, relying less on international nongovernmental organizations and foreign contractors, and increasing support for building local public health capacity and a sustainable and resilient private sector, increasing awareness and sensitivity to cultural norms of those impacted by the crisis, and improving communication and coordination among local communities, local and national governments, and the international community. These are not new ideas but they emerge time and again.

Finally, we need to be far better prepared for protecting American citizens from contagious diseases that can spread like wildfire from a single health care worker or other infected individual who returns from an affected country. Fortunately, only one death from Ebola occurred in the U.S., but it could have been far worse.

Now is the time to reassess how we should respond domestically and internationally to regional epidemics and prepare accordingly. We cannot afford to waste time and resources making the same mistakes and relearning old lessons.

A RETURN TO DEMOCRACY IN SRI LANKA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for hundreds of millions of people around the globe, including in countries whose governments are allies of the United States, democracy and human rights are aspirations that seem beyond reach. According to a recent report by Freedom House, the state of freedom in the world declined in almost every region over the past year. But while we