

At the hardware store where he has found work, in a city where he and his family have taken refuge, Mr. Royce was polite in assessing the proposed restrictions.

"Some people are saying, let them be, let them stay there," he said. "I wouldn't subscribe to that. There are innocent ones out there. This would mean there is no hope for them. If you screen, there are good ones among the bad. Everyone from Syria is not from ISIS. If you leave everybody, ISIS will take advantage of them."

Mr. Wankel was asked if his business had room for Syrian refugees.

"Certainly," he said. "If they are coming through the International Rescue Committee or Catholic Charities, I'd do it. They have a tough life. If I was in Syria, I'd want to get the heck out."

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, it is a story about a man named Sean Wankel. His family has owned a hardware store on the Upper East Side of Manhattan since the 19th century. For decades, the Wankel family has been hiring people who came to the United States to escape violence and persecution—asylees and refugees. The owner of the store, Sean Wankel, said: "People coming from really bad situations, trying to make a better life in America." Wankel, of course, takes these refugees in to work in their store. They are referred to him by Catholic charities and the International Rescue Committee. They stay for a few months or years as they get their bearings in the new world. He has a wall map in the hardware store with colored pens marking three dozen countries from which these workers have come.

The article goes on to tell the story of Felix Royce, who came to the United States a few months ago, from persecution by terrorists in Nigeria, and got a job in this hardware store.

It is interesting that for decades this man and his family have intentionally brought in these refugees and asylees and made them part of their business and life, while nearby, the Governor of New Jersey is quaking in his boots at the thought of a refugee coming into the State of New Jersey. What a contrast.

The gentleman at the hardware store said that it is not clear if the Republican Governor of New Jersey even understands who these people are.

I will quote Mr. Royce from Nigeria again:

Some people are saying, let them be, let them stay there. I wouldn't subscribe to that. There are innocent ones out there. This would mean there is no hope for them. If you screen, there are good ones among the bad. Everyone from Syria is not from ISIS. If you leave everybody, ISIS will take advantage of them.

It is hard for me to imagine some of the things that have been said recently by some of the Presidential candidates on the other side. It isn't just a matter of turning away Syrian refugees even with the clearance practices we have, but some have gone to even more extreme statements, saying that we should never allow people of the Muslim religion to come to the United States or that they should somehow be

identified in this country. If you are a student of history, you will know that kind of paranoia and that kind of prejudice has exhibited itself many times in our history. We look back on it now not with pride but with sadness to think that we reached the point where we treated people that way.

In May of 1939, when a shipload of Jews were trying to escape the Nazis in Germany—900 of them on the SS *St. Louis*—and came to Miami, they were turned away. They went back to Europe. Two-hundred of those Jews perished in the Holocaust because they were turned away from the United States of America. And when Senator Robert Wagner of New York suggested that we allow 10,000 Jewish children to come to the United States to escape the Nazis, that was defeated in this Congress. There were Japanese internment camps and other situations just like that—sad, fearful things that were done that we look back on now and say: We can't repeat those mistakes. But the language that is coming out of many today is an echo of the past decisions—decisions we look back on now and say never again. Sadly, they are being suggested even today.

Our first obligation is to keep America safe, and if we are going to do that, let's look to things that truly do keep us safe. Let's say that if you are on the terrorist watch list in the United States of America, you cannot legally purchase guns or explosives. That is not a radical idea; that is something we need to do to change the law. Instead of focusing on 70,000 refugees who go through 2 years of background checks before they come here, let's focus on the 20 million who visit the United States without visas each year from Europe and 38 countries around the world and make sure they have been carefully checked before they come to the United States.

There are things we can do to keep America safe, but denying access to refugees who are suffering now with their children in the hopes of finding a safe place is not American. It is not who we are. It is not who we should be.

I yield the floor.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MACKENZIE BAKER

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Mackenzie Baker, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Mackenzie is a graduate of Augusta Preparatory Day School in Augusta, GA. Currently, Mackenzie is attending American University, where she is a business and entertainment major. Mackenzie is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Mackenzie Baker for all of the fine work she has done and wish

her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO CAROLINE CRINION

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Caroline Crinion, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Caroline is a graduate of Brookings High School in Brookings, SD. Currently, Caroline is attending Georgetown University, where she is majoring in international political economy. Caroline is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Caroline Crinion for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SETH GERBERDING

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Seth Gerberding, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Seth is a graduate of Sturgis Brown High School in Sturgis, SD. Seth is planning on attending college next fall and majoring in math or political science. Seth is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Seth Gerberding for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MARY WRIGHT

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Mary Wright, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Mary is a graduate of Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda, MD. Currently, Mary is attending the University of Maryland, where she is majoring in communications. Mary is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Mary Wright for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United

States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN FOR PAY INCREASES FOR CIVILIAN FEDERAL EMPLOYEES COVERED BY THE GENERAL SCHEDULE AND CERTAIN OTHER PAY SYSTEMS IN JANUARY 2016—PM 33

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting an alternative plan for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2016.

Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of “national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare,” I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Civilian Federal employees have already made significant sacrifices as a result of 3-year pay freeze that ended in January 2014. In January 2014 and again in January 2015, increases for civilian Federal employees were limited to a 1.0 percent overall pay increase, an amount lower than the private sector pay increases and statutory formula for adjustments to the base General Schedule for 2014 and 2015. However, as the country’s economic recovery continues, we must maintain efforts to keep our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course. This is an effort that continues to require tough choices.

Under current law, locality pay increases averaging 28.74 percent and costing \$26 billion would go into effect in January 2016. Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases. Accordingly, I have determined that under the authority of section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, locality-based comparability payments for the locality pay areas established by the President’s Pay Agent, in the amounts set forth in the attached table, shall become effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2016. These rates are based on an allocation of 0.3 percent of payroll as indicated in my August 28, 2015, alternative pay plan for adjustments to the base General Schedule. These decisions will not materially

affect our ability to attract and retain a well-qualified Federal workforce.

The adjustments described above shall take effect on the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2016.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, November 30, 2015.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on November 23, 2015, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSE) had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 599. An act to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3189. An act to amend the Federal Reserve Act to establish requirements for policy rules and blackout periods of the Federal Open Market Committee, to establish requirements for certain activities of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and to amend title 31, United States Code, to reform the manner in which the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System is audited, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) reported that he had signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSE) of the House:

S. 599. An act to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

S. 2329. A bill to prevent the entry of extremists into the United States under the refugee program, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1611. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-168).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 1115. A bill to close out expired, empty grant accounts (Rept. No. 114-169).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 2093. A bill to provide that the Secretary of Transportation shall have sole authority to appoint Federal Directors to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Rept. No. 114-170).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment:

S. 2128. A bill to require the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency to submit to Congress a report on Inspector General mandates (Rept. No. 114-171).

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. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2332. A bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a permanent background check system; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 2333. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide taxpayer protection and assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 2334. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to adopt and implement a standard identification protocol for use in the tracking and procurement of biological implants by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KAINA, Mr. REID, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. SASSE):

S. Res. 322. A resolution recognizing the 60th anniversary of the refusal of Rosa Louise Parks to give up her seat on a bus on December 1, 1955; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 235

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 235, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 466

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 466, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to improve the quality, health outcomes, and value of maternity care under the