

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. MESSER) 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. MESSER) 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. KAINE, 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

Medicaid and CHIP programs by developing maternity care quality measures and supporting maternity care quality collaboratives.

S. 542

At the request of Mr. COATS, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 542, a bill to enhance the homeland security of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 551

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 551, a bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms or the issuance of firearms and explosives licenses to known or suspected dangerous terrorists.

S. 574

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 574, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers a credit against income tax for employees who participate in qualified apprenticeship programs.

S. 950

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 950, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit.

S. 1512

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1512, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 1714

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1714, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan and the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 1796

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1796, a bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to increase the age of eligibility for children to receive benefits under the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children and to allow States to certify infants for participation in that program for a period of 2 years, and for other purposes.

S. 1817

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs.

ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1817, a bill to improve the effectiveness of major rules in accomplishing their regulatory objectives by promoting retrospective review, and for other purposes.

S. 1818

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1818, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to reform the rule making process of agencies.

S. 1820

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1820, a bill to require agencies to publish an advance notice of proposed rule making for major rules.

S. 1831

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1831, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 1865

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1865, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to eating disorders, and for other purposes.

S. 1919

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1919, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1945

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1945, a bill to make available needed psychiatric, psychological, and supportive services for individuals with mental illness and families in mental health crisis, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2031

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2031, a bill to reduce temporarily the royalty required to be paid for sodium produced on Federal lands, and for other purposes.

S. 2075

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2075, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage and to express the sense of the Senate that the resulting revenue loss should be offset.

S. 2267

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2267, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve the financial aid process for homeless children and youths and foster care children and youth.

S. 2295

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2295, a bill to extend the termination date for the authority to collect certain records and make permanent the authority for roving surveillance and to treat individual terrorists as agents of foreign powers under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, and for other purposes.

S. 2311

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2323

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2323, a bill to clarify the definition of nonimmigrant for purposes of chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code.

S. RES. 148

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 148, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 322—RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFUSAL OF ROSA LOUISE PARKS TO GIVE UP HER SEAT ON A BUS ON DECEMBER 1, 1955

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. KAINE, Mr. REID, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. SASSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 322

Whereas many historians date the beginning of the modern civil rights movement in the United States as December 1, 1955;

Whereas Rosa Louise McCauley Parks was born on February 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama, the first child of James and Leona (Edwards) McCauley;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a Caucasian man, and her stand for equal rights became legendary;

Whereas news of the arrest of Rosa Louise Parks resulted in approximately 42,000 African-Americans boycotting Montgomery buses for 381 days, beginning on December 5, 1955, until the bus segregation law was changed on December 21, 1956;

Whereas the United States Supreme Court ruled on November 13, 1956, that the Montgomery segregation law was unconstitutional, and on December 20, 1956, Montgomery officials were ordered to desegregate buses;

Whereas the civil rights movement led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which broke down the barrier of legal discrimination against African-Americans;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks has been honored as the “first lady of civil rights” and the “mother of the freedom movement”, and her quiet dignity ignited the most significant social movement in the history of the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was the recipient of many awards and accolades for her efforts on behalf of racial harmony, including—

- (1) the Congressional Gold Medal;
- (2) the Spingarn Award, which is the highest honor of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for civil rights contributions; and
- (3) the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the highest civilian honor in the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was named 1 of the 20 most influential and iconic figures of the 20th century;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks sparked 1 of the largest movements in the United States against racial segregation, and by her quiet courage symbolizes all that is vital about nonviolent protest because of the way she endured threats of death and persisted as an advocate for the basic lessons she taught the people of the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks and her husband Raymond Parks relocated to Michigan in 1957, and remained in Michigan until the death of Rosa Louise Parks on October 24, 2005;

Whereas, in November 2005, Congress authorized the Joint Committee on the Library to procure a statue of Rosa Louise Parks to be placed in the Capitol; and

Whereas the bus on which Rosa Louise Parks sparked a new era in the quest for

freedom and equality in the United States is—

(1) 1 of the most significant artifacts of the civil rights movement in the United States; and

(2) on permanent display in the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and celebrates the 60th anniversary of the refusal of Rosa Louise Parks to give up her seat on a bus on December 1, 1955;

(2) commemorates the legacy of Rosa Louise Parks to inspire all people of the United States to stand up for freedom and the principles of the Constitution; and

(3) endeavors to work with the same courage, dignity, and determination exemplified by a civil rights pioneer, Rosa Louise Parks, to address modern inequalities and injustices.

Mr. DURBIN. 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.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Gayle Smith, of Ohio, to be Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 30 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, 2 months ago I came to the Senate floor to urge the majority leader to schedule a vote on the nomination of Gayle Smith to serve as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, also known as USAID. Here we are, 7 months after the President nominated her to fill this position. The Senate will have a chance in a few minutes to vote on Gayle Smith's nomination to head USAID.

I fully expect that today's vote will lead to her confirmation. We are witnessing a humanitarian crisis in Syria and across the Middle East that grows worse by the day, posing a risk to European stability and cohesion. Having someone at the head of USAID is absolutely critical. The United States, with

our unparalleled capacity to mobilize international support for humanitarian relief, should continue to play a leading role in assisting both Syrian refugees and the neighboring countries that are hosting them.

Having an effective leader such as Gayle Smith at USAID is a critical part of that effort. Last month I had the opportunity to lead a delegation of three other Senators to Greece and Germany. Senator DURBIN, Senator WARREN, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and I all went to see firsthand the plight of refugees from the war in Syria and the incredible burden that both Greece and Germany are under as a result of these unprecedented refugee flows.

Many of us—and we heard this when we were in Greece—believed that the rate of refugee arrivals would slow with the coming of cold weather. In fact, the exact opposite has happened, and the humanitarian situation has only become worse.

Of course, USAID's work is not only limited to the situation in Syria; it extends to the 60 countries and regional USAID missions around the world, including in Afghanistan, where USAID development work is critical to the long-term success and security of that country.

I am relieved that we are finally going to get to vote on Gayle Smith and that the majority has overcome the objections of the one Member who, for the last 7 months, has been holding up her nomination. That Member was willing to put at risk the massive investment of resources the United States has made in Afghanistan and other parts of the world just to score political points on an issue that was completely outside of Gayle Smith's portfolio at USAID.

As things have moved on Gayle Smith, I am hoping this type of obstruction is going to end, and we will soon vote not only on Ms. Smith's nomination but also to confirm other critical national security nominees, especially the pending Foreign Service nominations that have been approved by the Foreign Relations Committee and that could be voted on by the full Senate today.

For example, in May the President nominated Tom Melia to be Assistant Administrator for USAID for Europe and Eurasia. This is a critical position not only because of the development work but because these are two regions that are under extreme pressure from Vladimir Putin. These regions would both benefit from USAID programs that would bolster their ability to act independently of Russian influence. Tom Melia is still unconfirmed, despite the fact that the Foreign Relations Committee approved his nomination in July. In addition, the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Sweden has been pending for over a year. Sweden has become a much more critical ally in terms of the refugee issue that Europe is facing. The nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Norway—again another critical ally—has been pending