giving them the recognition and support they deserve. We must do so through words and action. In our everyday daily lives let us remember those who have sacrificed so much to defend our Nation and our freedom. Let us preserve their legacy and follow their example of service to others.

When you see someone wearing a ball cap that says Vietnam vet, World War II vet, Korean vet, Iraq or Afghanistan vet, say thanks. My guess is they will say: Thank you; I was just doing my job. But they were doing so much more than just their job. They were protecting our Nation and making sure that our children and our children's children had a chance to grow up in this most blessed of all places.

God bless every American and Hoosier veteran who served in Vietnam. God bless their families. God bless Indiana, and God bless America.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Indiana for his great remarks. I thank him for making them today.

PUERTO RICO

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor tonight to discuss Puerto Rico, a territory of the United States since 1898. Millions of residents have been citizens since 1917, nearly 100 years. This community of 3.5 million people is facing economic, fiscal, and liquidity problems. What are we doing about it here in Congress? We are not doing anything. That needs to change, and it needs to change now.

We spent 10 years watching Puerto Rico suffer through a recession. We spent months here in Congress discussing what to do. There have been a lot of ideas—some popular, some controversial. I can say that, as the ranking member on the Energy Committee, I have heard many ideas, but now is the time to act.

We need to allow Puerto Rico to restructure. That is, we need to give them the same opportunities that we gave to average American citizens and municipalities to restructure their debt—the same that we gave to Wall Street when they were in a financial crisis, the same brink that we were almost on when we had our own economic problems. Yet there are some here in the halls of Congress who would rather listen to hedge funds and make sure they are prioritized in a debt restructuring than actually putting in place debt restructuring.

I propose a two-part, no-cost approach that will be most effective and least controversial to help us out of this situation.

The Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which has jurisdiction over territories, has heard from experts from the Department of Treasury and other government officials about how dire this situation is now. Just yesterday, a group of six CEOs sent a letter to congressional leaders urging swift legislative action on the Puerto Rico situation.

I can tell my colleagues the whole issue of what to do about Puerto Rico in the long term has many divergent views, but all those divergent views in Puerto Rico are singing the same tune right now: Restructure before January 1 or they will face serious issues of default. Why do we care? We care because the U.S. Government will have an impact of between $1 billion and $2 billion of more service demands if we do not allow them to restructure.

This year, the government and electric utilities failed to make their payments. Government workers are being cut to three days a week. Patients are now waiting months for medical care. Hospitals are going bankrupt. And the health care industry is threatened by a complete collapse. Forty-five percent of the population is living in poverty—including 58 percent of them who are children—and the unemployment rate is stuck at 12.2 percent, more than double the highest State's unemployment rate.

So what does it cost us to act here in the United States? It costs the U.S. taxpayers zero. It costs us zero because if we think about it, this is about debt restructuring. This about setting up a process which they are denied just because Puerto Rico is a territory; they cannot get the relief of restructuring. They tried. They tried to pass their own bankruptcy law. They tried, and then basically were told that it didn't meet a Federal standard.

They are not like a municipality that has this authority. They are a territory. They are our territory. If we want them to restructure successfully and keep more debt from coming to the shores of the United States because of—I would say that we have had a huge increase in population. So the cost of inaction is this acceleration of the Puerto Rico population coming to the United States. In 2014, we see that the number jumped to almost 70,000 people in one year. The net migration has been more than 500 percent in the last 10 years.

If we do nothing in the next week and don't act on this problem, more migration of Puerto Ricans is going to come to the United States. When they come, what will happen? They will be demanding more services, such as Head Start, SNAP, unemployment insurance, and Pell Grants. So default equals more Federal spending.

The notion that my colleagues think that somehow this inaction is the way out of this equation—they are just adding more responsibility to the U.S. taxpayer. Why? Is it because they want to protect hedge funds in a bankruptcy process? Do they want to decide in the Halls of the U.S. Congress who gets in line first and who gets paid?

I will remind my colleagues, particularly since the Presiding Officer knows the Deepwater Horizon issue very well, we did not make decisions here in the U.S. Congress—in the Senate and in the House of Representatives—as to who would get paid in the Deepwater accident implosion. We appointed a receiver. They made the tough decisions. When it came to Detroit's bankruptcy, we did not make the decision.

I guarantee my colleagues that of 100 Members of the U.S. Senate, there are probably 100 opinions in both of those cases as to how we thought each of those payments or restructurings should be done. But we are not the experts, and just because we have an opinion about what we would like to see Puerto Rico do doesn't mean we should be writing that into legislation and prejudging what should be an official, legal process of restructuring debt that we need to give Puerto Rico the authority to have.

This is what newspapers across the United States are saying, including the Los Angeles Times, the Miami Herald, the Boston Globe, the New York Times, and others: Give Puerto Rico the ability to restructure their debt.

So why are people here failing to take up this mantle? People have been arguing for months about different ideas. Some of our colleagues want to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rate. Some of our colleagues want to have an EITC increase. Some of our colleagues want Puerto Rico to do away with their pensions before they go into a bankruptcy structure. Those are all political opinions by individuals that one could say are worth debate.

Now we are at the point of default. Just as we need to make decisions before January 1, our colleagues are now trying to say that we can continue to discuss this issue. We don't have time to continue to discuss this issue. We have next week, and, as a member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee that oversees territories, I feel it is our responsibility to propose a policy and get it in place so that we can find some resolution of this issue.

I think this two-part fix about making sure there is the ability to restructure and a council to oversee it in coordination with Treasury is the best we can do at this point in time to save the U.S. Government from further costs and to give relief to Puerto Rico.

The notion that people here in the U.S. House of Representatives or the U.S. Senate are trying to protect hedge funds so that they can maximize their return is despicable. It is despicable. The notion that somebody is trying to protect these fundamental questions that need to be decided in a formal process of bankruptcy or reform, as we are calling it within the territory, is the fair and even process that should take place without prejudice.

We are going to, as a body, have a very robust discussion, I guarantee my colleagues, for years and years and years to come about what the United States is going to do about the territory of Puerto Rico. Let's at least give

ourselves the luxury of having that discussion when the territory is not in default. Let's come together and pass some legislation for them to restructure their debt. Let a professional organization take the politics out of this and make the best financial decisions that can be made now to save the U.S. taxpayer from further expense.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

BEING HONEST WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, earlier today it was reported that the President's Deputy National Security Adviser was asked about my call that the President and the administration speak clearly about the nature of the enemy we face—about my call that we be honest with the American people and with ourselves about the fact that we are at war with militant Islam, we are at war with jihadi Islam, and we are at war with violent Islam.

In response, the White House was quoted in the World-Herald this morning as saying this:

> Our strong belief is to not treat these ISIL terrorists as leaders of some religious movement. Even if you have a derogatory adjective attached to it—radical Islam or Islamic extremism—essentially you are saying they are the leaders of a religious movement. And that is what they want. They want to be seen not as terrorists and killers and thugs, as the president said, but as leaders who speak on behalf of religion. And that is why we have not identified them as the enemy in this effort.

This is lunacy. First, while the White House is insisting that no one use the word ''Islamic'' or note any connection between the war that we are facing and some subset of Islam—even as the White House insists that no one use the word, their own preferred adjective, ''ISIL'' or ''ISIS,'' begins with an ''I.'' Every fourth grader in America can deduce without any assistance from Vanna White what the rest of the word that begins with an ''I'' is. Yet the White House insists that no one should use the word.

They are dealing with a world they wish were so, as opposed to the world with which we are called to struggle. The world in which we live is a world where we are going to be facing a decades-long battle with militant Islam, with jihadi Islam, with violent Islam. We are obviously not at war with all Muslims, but we are at war with those who believe they would kill in the name of religion, and the White House insists that we muzzle ourselves and not tell the truth.

Second, the White House's logic for why we shouldn't tell the truth to the American people or to ourselves is because the leaders of ISIL supposedly want to be identified with a religious movement. The leaders of the ISIL movement and the broader jihadi movement that is trying to kill Americans and all those who believe in freedom and in open society—the leaders of this movement also want to be martyred. Isn't the President's position that we should not kill them because they desire to be martyred? This is lunacy.

We have to speak the truth not because it alone will somehow diminish ISIS or ISIL, but because speaking the truth is actually the only way we can begin to develop policies that will not lead to more failed States in the Middle East, which are producing the terror training camps of next year.

Despite the fact that we are actually and obviously at war with militant Islam, there is a terrible leadership vacuum in this country. The American people know this, and, frankly, those of us who are getting our classified briefings and having to engage the leadership of our national security and intelligence communities know this leadership vacuum exists. Those who are trying to keep Americans safe—there are many wonderful, freedom-loving civil servants fighting to protect our kids, and they know and experience this vacuum of leadership every day.

This vacuum is felt outside the beltway and everywhere in America, as is obvious in many of our towns. But even more dishearteningly and more dangerously, it is increasingly obvious to the professionals working in our intelligence community and in our national security structure that this vacuum is harming our national security and our intelligence community as they try to fight for our freedom.

Here is why this matters. This vacuum prevents them from doing their jobs. They have no strategy to deploy, they have no rational policy to implement, and they have been asked to defeat an enemy that their Commander in Chief refuses to name. This is lunacy, it is absurd, and it is unacceptable.

Mr. President: Please lead.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the words of the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. SASSE, with whom I enjoy serving on the banking committee, and I appreciate his good work. I take a bit of issue with his comments. I know there are more than two options. But I hear the greatest criticisms of the President from those same people, urging—not necessarily Senator SASSE in this case, but many of the leaders in this body on the Republican side who were some of the strongest advocates for the war in Iraq. Some of those same people are saying, back into the Middle East, sending combat troops.

Going back to war is something that the American people—we all come to the floor claiming to speak for the American people, perhaps, but we know that is not good policy and that is not what most people in this country want to do. But I appreciate the comments of the Senator.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question? Do you believe there is any connection between our enemy and Islam?

Mr. BROWN. Excuse me?

Mr. SASSE. Do you believe there is any connection between our enemy and Islam?

Mr. BROWN. I am not here to debate this. I don't know exactly what that means: a connection between the enemy and Islam. I know that semantics matter, and I know the criticism of the President in this body is sort of front and center no matter what he does.

When he gave what I thought was a coherent speech, often with restraint, where we have taken the—I think we have taken the fight to ISIL in this country. I think we have done it domestically. I think the President wants to do it internationally, and this body doesn't seem to have the courage to debate whether or not we actually look at an authorization resolution—an authorization for use of force. The President is still forced to rely on a resolution that President Bush pushed through that led to disastrous policies in Iraq. I don't think that was right.

But I apologize. I want to speak on something else, Mr. President, and that is why I came to the floor.

SUPPORING OUR VETERANS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago most of us went home to our families to celebrate and give thanks for the many blessings we have in this country. We all look forward to spending more time with family during this holiday season, but for far too many Americans the holidays are just another time when they struggle to put food on the table or even to have a roof over their heads. This is sadly particularly true of our Nation's veterans.

Again, to go back 15 years, we take people into war in this country—sometimes for very good reason. Our sending troops to Afghanistan was exactly the right policy back in 2002 and 2003. Going into the war in Iraq was something very different.

If we in this body are going to send people into war, it is time we think about the costs of war, not come to the Senate floor and make speeches about how tough we are as Senators, when most Senators don't have children—some do, but most don't have children who go off to war. We are willing to send people into combat, and then we too often turn our backs on those soldiers once they come home and become our Nation's veterans.

The suicide rate is too high among veterans, many of them suffering from PTSD or traumatic brain injury or a host of other illnesses or afflictions. The suicide rate is too high, the unemployment rate for veterans is too high, and the drug addiction rate is too high. Yet, how often our colleagues come and talk about, let's send combat troops, let's go to war. How rarely they talk