

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment and know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion to concur.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE PROSECUTION AND CONVICTION OF FORMER PRESIDENT MOHAMED NASHEED WITHOUT DUE PROCESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 402, S. Res. 392.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 392) expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, to release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 392) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 8, 2016, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we have a unique opportunity for the American people to have a voice in the direction of the Supreme Court. The American people should be afforded the opportunity to weigh in on this very important matter.

Our side, meaning the Republican side, believes very strongly that the people deserve to be heard, and they should be allowed to decide through their vote for the next President the type of person who should be on the Supreme Court.

As I have stated previously, this is a reasonable approach, it is a fair approach, and it is a historical approach—one echoed by then-Chairman BIDEN, Senator SCHUMER, and other Senators.

The other side, meaning the Democratic side, has been talking a great deal about the so-called pressure campaign to try to get Members to change their position. It is no secret that the White House strategy is to put pressure on this chairman of the Judiciary Committee and other Republicans in the hopes that we can be worn down and ultimately agree to hold hearings on the nominee.

This pressure campaign, which is targeted at me and a handful of my colleagues, is based on the supposition that I and they will crack and move forward on the consideration of President Obama's pick.

This strategy has failed to recognize that I am no stranger to political pressure and to strong-arm tactics—not necessarily just from Democratic Presidents but also from Republican Presidents.

When I make a decision based on sound principle, I am not about to flip-flop because the left has organized what they call a pressure campaign.

As many of my colleagues—and especially my constituents—know, I have done battle with administrations of both parties. I have fought over irresponsible budgets, waste, fraud, and policy disagreements. I have made tough decisions. I have stuck with those tough decisions regardless of what pressure was applied.

The so-called pressure being applied to me now is nothing. It is absolutely nothing compared to what I withstood from heavyhanded White House political operations in the past.

Let me say, by the way, that most of that has come from Republican White Houses. To just give a few examples, in 1981, as a new Member of the Senate and a brand-new member of the Senate Budget Committee, I voted against President Reagan's first budget proposal because we were promised a balanced budget and it didn't balance. I remember very specifically the Budget Committee markup in April 1981 on President Reagan's first budget.

It happened to be that I wasn't alone on this. I was one of three Republicans to vote against that resolution because it did not put us on a path to a balanced budget. You can imagine that when a budget has to come out on a party-line vote, you cannot lose three Republicans, and three Republicans who were elected in 1980 on a promise to balance the budget did not go along with it.

What a loss this was for this new President Reagan—that his budget might not get adopted by the Budget Committee. We were under immense pressure to act on the President's budget regardless of the deficits that it would cause. But we stood on principle and didn't succumb to the pressure.

As an example, right after that vote where the President's budget wasn't voted out of the Budget Committee, I was home on a spring recess. I remember calls from the White House. I remember threats from the Chamber of Commerce while I was home for Easter break, even interrupting my town meetings. Four years later, I led the charge to freeze spending and to end the Reagan defense buildup as a way to get the Federal budget under control. In 1984 I teamed up with Senator BIDEN, a Democrat, and Senator Kassebaum of Kansas, a Republican, to propose a freeze of the defense budget that would have cut hundreds of billions of dollars from the annual deficit.

At the time, it was known as the Kassebaum-Grassley Budget or the KGB defense freeze. We were going to make sure that across-the-board budgets were responsible.

For months, I endured pressure from the Reagan administration and from my Republican colleagues who argued a freeze on defense spending would constitute unilateral disarmament. President Reagan had put together a less aggressive deficit reduction plan. We didn't think it went far enough. My bipartisan plan was attacked for being dangerous and causing draconian cuts to the defense budget. I knew it was realistic and a responsible approach. I didn't back down.

We forced a vote that year in the Budget Committee. We forced a vote on the Senate floor on May 2, 1984, and that particular year we were not successful. However, this effort required the Senate and the Nation to have a debate about a growing defense budget. We started that debate, about the waste and inefficiency in the Pentagon and the growing Federal fiscal deficits. Despite the weeks-long pressure from conservatives in the Reagan administration, I did not back down because I knew the policy was on my side.

In this process I stood up to pressure from President Reagan, Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger, Secretary Barry Goldwater, Senator John Tower, Chairman of the Budget Committee, and many others. I remember a meeting at the White House where I reminded the President that he had been talking through the campaign about the Welfare queens impacting the budget. It happens that I reminded him there were Defense queens as well.

I started doing oversight on the Defense Department. It wasn't long before the evidence of waste and fraud began appearing. We uncovered contractors that billed the Defense Department \$435 for a claw hammer, \$750 for toilet seats, \$695 for ashtrays. We even found a coffee pot that cost \$7,600.

I had no problem finding Democrats to join my oversight effort back then, but it is interesting how difficult it is to find bipartisan help when doing oversight in the current Democrat administration. Nevertheless, 12 months later, on May 2, 1985, after a year of

work to make the case that the Defense Department needed structural reforms and slower spending growth, I was successful. My amendment to freeze the defense budget and allow for increases based on inflation was agreed to when a motion to table failed by a vote of 48 to 51.

A majority of the Republicans opposed me, and a majority of the Democrats were with me. That didn't matter because I knew we were doing the right thing. I went against my own party, my own President, to hold the Pentagon accountable, and I never backed off.

I had a similar experience with President George W. Bush in 1991. In January 1991, the Senate debated a resolution to authorize the use of U.S. Armed Forces to remove Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait. I opposed the resolution because I felt the economic and diplomatic sanctions that I voted for should have been given more time to work. I was not ready to give up on sanctions in favor of war.

In the end, I was one of just two Republicans, along with Senator Hatfield of Oregon, to oppose the resolution. I was under pressure from President Bush, Vice President Quayle, and White House Chief of Staff John Sununu. I was even pressured by Iowa Governor Terry Branstad. I heard from a lot of Iowans, particularly Republicans, who were disappointed and even angry with my position. Some were even considering a public rebuke because of my vote. As one of just two Republicans, it was difficult to differ with a Republican President on such a major issue. But as I stated at the time, my decision was above any partisanship. It was a decision of conscience rather than a matter of Republican versus Democrat.

After a tremendous amount of soul-searching, I did what I thought was right, regardless of the political pressure. The same is true today with regard to the Supreme Court vacancy.

Under President George W. Bush, I faced another dilemma. The President and the Republican congressional leadership determined that they wanted to provide \$1.6 trillion in tax relief in 2001.

I was chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance. The problem is, we had a Senate that was divided 50-50 at the time. The parties' numbers also equal, on the Senate Finance Committee. I had two members on my side who were reluctant to support a huge tax cut because they had concerns about the deficit and the debt.

As we saw a few years later, their concerns were not totally unwarranted. But, at the time, the administration leadership would have nothing to do with anything except what the President wanted—\$1.6 trillion in tax relief. Obviously, the White House wasn't thinking about how many Republicans might vote against it, and when you have a 50-50 Senate, you can't lose a lot of Republicans.

After very difficult negotiations, I finally rounded up enough votes to sup-

port \$1.3 trillion in tax relief. A hailstorm of criticism followed. There were Republican House Members who held press conferences denouncing the fact that the Committee wasn't able to get enough votes for the whole \$1.6 trillion. Those House Members were more professional in their criticism of my position, than what we currently witness almost every day from the current minority leader about my role as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. But, it was still a very contentious and difficult period that included both the budget and the reconciliation process.

Minority Leader REID has already recently brought up the pressure I came under in regard to ObamaCare back in 2009. Of course, his version is his usual attempt to rewrite the actual history. At that time, I was the ranking member of the Finance Committee. I was involved in very in-depth negotiations to try to come up with a health care solution. We started in November of 2008. We had negotiations between three Republicans and three Democrats on the Finance Committee. We met for hours and hours at a time.

We met between November 2008 and mid-September 2009, and then the other side decided they ought to go political and not worry about Republicans. The minority leader, in his usual inaccurate statement of facts has tried to say that Republicans walked out of those negotiations on ObamaCare. The fact is, we were given a deadline and told that if we didn't agree with the latest draft of the bill, then Democrats would have to move on.

I would suggest that anybody in the Senate who wants some reference on this should talk to Senator Snowe or Senator ENZI. I was the other Republican. Talk to Senator Baucus, talk to Senator Conrad and the then-Senator from New Mexico. The President called six of us to the White House in early August of 2009. The first question I got was this: Would you, Senator GRASSLEY, be willing to go along with two or three Republicans to have a bipartisan bill with ObamaCare at that point? And I said: Mr. President, the answer is no. What do you think we have been working on for 9 months? We have been working, trying to get a broad bipartisan agreement. It's something like 70 to 75 votes you need to get if you really want to have a changed social policy and have it stick.

We didn't abandon this until 2009. But my idea is that probably it was that meeting at the White House in early August 2009 where this President decided: we don't want to mess around with those Republicans anymore. We have 60 votes; we are going to move ahead. Well, that happened then in that September.

The fact is, we were given that deadline, and we were shoved out of the room. So when we didn't bow to this pressure and agree to Democratic demands, it ended up being a partisan document. That is why it still doesn't have the majority support of the American people.

I want the minority leader to know that is what happened, not what he described a couple of weeks ago. Eventually, as we all know, the former majority leader—now minority leader—had his staff rewrite the bill that came out of the HELP Committee and in secret in the back rooms of his leadership office. And we ended up with the disaster called ObamaCare that we have today.

The Senate minority leader also recently proclaimed that rather than follow Leader MCCONNELL—and these are Senator REID's words—"Republicans are sprinting in the opposite direction." The minority leader also wishfully claimed that the Republican facade was cracking on the issue. Senator SCHUMER fancifully stated that "because of the pressure, Republicans are beginning to change."

You can almost hear the ruby slippers on the other side clicking while they wish this narrative they describe were true. The fact is, the pressure they have applied thus far has had no impact on this Senator's principled position or the principled position of almost everybody on this side of the aisle. Our side knows and believes that what we are doing is right, and when that is the case, it is not hard to withstand the outrage and the pressure they and the White House have manufactured.

The pressure we are now getting on this issue pales in comparison to the pressure I have endured and withstood from both Democrats and Republicans in the past.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the bill that is on the floor, the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act. I thank Senator THUNE and Senator NELSON for their leadership.

I serve on the Commerce Committee. I am proud of this bill. Our State has a long history of aviation. It was the childhood home of Charles Lindbergh. We are home to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, the 13th busiest airport in the United States. We are home to Cirrus Design Corporation in Duluth, which makes planes and is a very successful company, as well as many people whose jobs and ways of life depend on the aviation industry, not to mention the 148th Fighter Wing National Guard base, as well as the one in the Twin Cities and the one in Duluth.

I see my colleague from Arizona is here, so I will focus on one issue, and that is aviation security.

Mr. President, 9/11 was our country's wake-up call that our transportation system is a target, and the attacks in Brussels last month remind us that we must continue to do everything we can to strengthen security, and not just in our security lines at the airports but also in places like baggage claim areas and other forms of transportation, like train stations. We need to make sure

our soft-target areas, as they are called—like the security lines, baggage claims, and ticketing counters at the airport—are safe.

I am a cosponsor of the amendment that passed today that will help address the issue by doubling the number of visible intermodal prevention and response teams from 30 to 60. These teams help provide important deterrent security at potential air and ground transportation targets across our country.

This amendment which passed today will also improve existing security systems in airports and train stations by expanding bomb-sniffing dog patrols, law enforcement training for emergency situations, and security in all perimeter areas of the airport.

We must also improve the secure areas of airports where airline employees have secure access to what are called sterile areas. In March, as we all know, an airline employee was arrested after attempting to use his badge to enter the boarding area of a terminal from the tarmac, bypassing security gates. He had a backpack with \$282,000 in it. In the same month, we saw another employee try to smuggle 70 pounds of cocaine in her suitcase at LAX, and she was caught at a security checkpoint. The most egregious breach of security happened at the Atlanta airport, where airline employees helped to facilitate a gun-smuggling ring and were successful at getting guns on at least 20 flights from Atlanta to New York. Needless to say, there continues to be significant concern, as much as we know that the vast majority of our airline employees are hard-working and good employees.

Eighty-five Senators just voted in support of the Airport Security Enforcement and Oversight Act, a bill I cosponsored that would help address this issue of security at the airport, but I would like to add our own story out of Minnesota-St. Paul.

First of all, it is a story of inefficiency, so we made a reconfiguration at our airport. There were lines at one point where the average time was 45 to 50 minutes—average time. That was just a month ago. There were passengers waiting for 2 hours and missing their flights. There were simply not enough TSA agents. They were out at a training, which was, of course, necessary because of the inspector general's report that came out this June and showed some severe problems in security at our airports. So we had a perfect storm of people out for training, a new reconfiguration, and finally the spring break travel. But it was simply unacceptable when our taxpayers are paying for TSA. In fact, this Congress authorized \$100 million—\$90 million more than they asked for in the last budget year.

I have appreciated TSA Administrator Neffenger coming to Minnesota, saying that it was unacceptable, saying that they were hiring people with the budget money that was provided.

There are also plans to use these K-9 units not just in the perimeters of the bill we passed today but also on these lines. Not only do these dog teams add more security, by working a line of passengers, they actually speed up that line because then those passengers essentially become prechecked passengers and they don't have to be prechecked. They become prechecked because of the dogs, and that speeds up everything for all airport passengers.

I think we have seen enough of these terrorist attacks across the country, planes with bombs going down in other places. We know this is a danger. We don't want this in our homeland.

I appreciate the support of my colleagues on these amendments. We will continue to work on security issues.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

PERMANENT VA CHOICE CARD ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the urgent need for Congress to reform how the Department of Veterans Affairs delivers health care to our Nation's veterans. One of the great scandals and shameful aspects of the greatest Nation in the world is the way we treat our veterans. I believe important progress has been made since the scandal in which veterans died, waiting on nonexistent wait-lists for care at the Phoenix VA medical center and VA hospitals around the country, but we have a long way to go to fulfill our solemn promise to every veteran who has served and sacrificed.

In the matter of that terrible scandal, I was proud that Congress quickly acted to pass the bipartisan Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act. That bill was an important first step—and I emphasize “first step”—in reforming the gross mismanagement and lack of accountability at the VA.

In my view, the hallmark of the bill is the Choice Card Program, which for the first time allows any veteran who is waiting more than 30 days for an appointment or who lives more than 40 miles from a VA health care facility to receive a Choice Card that they can use to visit a participating doctor in their community instead of being forced to wait with no recourse.

So how is the VA Choice Card working? My colleagues in the Senate and I continue to hear from veterans in Arizona and across the country about their ongoing problems receiving care. Veterans find that VA staff don't know about the Choice Card or how to authorize care through it. Veterans are forced to wait on hold for hours with a call center in order to schedule an appointment. Community doctors and hospitals that volunteered to participate in the Choice Program are not getting paid for their services. Veterans who are able to use the Choice Card once and need to use it again have to start all over from scratch. Veterans still have to drive long distances to get prescription medications.

There should be no doubt that the VA is failing to fully and effectively implement the Choice Card. In doing so, it is preventing our veterans from receiving the flexible care they have earned and deserve.

We know that when implemented correctly, the Choice Card Program is improving care for our veterans. After an extremely difficult start, the VA Choice Card is now authorizing more than 110,000 appointments for veteran care per month—over 5,000 per workday. Each of these appointments represents a veteran's appointment that would otherwise be delayed and pending for months in the VA scheduling system. It also frees up appointments at the VA for veterans who do not use the Choice Card, helping countless veterans receive an appointment faster.

We have also seen what can happen when the VA properly reimburses community doctors for their services. In the western region alone, community doctors participating in the VA Choice Program have increased from around 95,000 to nearly 160,000. More than 90 percent of all doctors are being paid within 30 days, and the vast majority of doctors are choosing to stay in the VA Choice Program—mainly because of their love of country—to treat our Nation's veterans.

Moreover, we have seen that when the VA is equipped to handle the demand for Choice Program appointments made through call centers, veterans are getting their appointments faster. Recent openings of new call centers have greatly reduced wait and on-hold times among our veterans. Today, wait time averages for veterans calling into the western region call centers for Choice Card appointments are less than 1 minute.

As a result of a positive VA policy change last year, contractors are now able to contact veterans and ensure that their authorizations for care are approved ahead of time so that appointments can be made much faster over the phone.

While we are seeing important progress as a result of the Choice Card, far too many veterans are still experiencing long wait and on-hold times with call centers and confronting difficulties getting an appointment. Unfortunately, some veterans, veterans service organizations, and opponents of the VA Choice Card cite these shortcomings as evidence that the whole Choice Card Program is broken and needs to be eliminated. These opponents are wrong, and they know it. The problem isn't the Choice Card; it is that the VA refuses to implement it correctly.

Instead of working to solve the problems at the VA head-on, the same bureaucrats who have completely bungled the implementation of the VA Choice Card are using their own failures as an excuse to shut down the entire program. Allowing them to do so would only send veterans back to the unacceptable status quo of never-ending

wait times for appointments. Does anybody want to return to the status quo?

I refuse to send our veterans back to the nonexistent wait-lists that led to the scandal of denied and delayed care in the first place. Every representative in Congress and every official at the VA should too. According to a poll recently released by Gallup, the American people overwhelmingly agree. Ninety-one percent of survey respondents believe that veterans should be allowed to get health care from any provider who accepts Medicare, not just the VA.

This chart describes the main problems with VA health care before the Choice Program. Today, military and civilian retirees; Federal employees, including VA employees; ObamaCare enrollees; civilians on employer insurance plans; and refugees and illegal immigrants have the ability to choose their doctors. The only group of Americans who is still being denied universal choice in health care is disabled veterans. How is it that we have created a system where virtually everyone in America gets to choose their doctor except for our Nation's disabled veterans?

Our veterans want and need the opportunity to choose the health care that works best for them. It is simply unacceptable that half a million veterans nationwide today are waiting for a medical appointment that is scheduled more than 30 days from now. We can address this crisis now by making simple changes to the law. Under the law, the VA Choice Card pilot program expires next year. We cannot and will not go back to the way our VA operated before the scandal.

While some senior VA leaders are aggressively implementing the Choice Program, many others believe veterans should be forced to stay within the walls of the VA no matter what. Making the program permanent will send a clear message that we refuse to send veterans back to the days of denied and delayed care. That is why I introduced legislation to make the VA Choice Card permanent and universal. I believe every veteran—no matter where they live or how long they are waiting for an appointment—should have the ability to see a doctor of their choice in their community.

Last week I held a townhall meeting with veterans in Phoenix, AZ, along with Mike Broomhead, a distinguished leader in our community. With tears in their eyes and frustration in their voices, veterans described the unending wait times for appointments and difficulty obtaining and using the Choice Card to receive the care they want and need. More than 2 years after the scandal in care first arose in Phoenix, AZ, and more than a year after reform legislation was signed into law, the VA is still failing our veterans.

It doesn't have to be this way. There are additional steps we can take now to reform this broken health care system. That is why I recently announced my Care Veterans Deserve action plan. The

elements of my plan address some of the most urgent problems still plaguing the VA.

First, the action plan proposes keeping the VA open later during the week and opening the VA on weekends for local doctors and nurses to treat our veterans. This would address the most common complaint we hear that wait times for appointments are still too long. In Arizona, wait times have gotten worse—not better—over the last year, with more than 10 percent of all the Arizona veterans having to wait more than 30 days for care at the VA.

Despite these long wait times, veterans are still not allowed to make appointments past 3 p.m. during the week and have very few appointment options on weekends. VA employees abruptly close clinics no matter what a veteran needs at the end of the day. By keeping the VA open later and adding hours on weekends, we can address these unacceptably high wait times and maximize the use of our VA facilities.

I have also proposed in the Care Veterans Deserve action plan that the VA allow community walk-in clinics to treat veterans for minor injuries and illnesses such as a cold, the flu, allergies, sinus infections, immunizations, vaccines, sore throats, and minor headaches. Again, this would greatly reduce the need for veterans to visit VA emergency rooms after hours and would free up appointments for everyone waiting for care at the VA.

The plan also proposes that we require VA pharmacies to stay open until 8 p.m. during the week and for at least 8 hours on Saturday and Sundays. This would tackle a common complaint among our working veterans who cannot visit VA pharmacies during their limited workday hours to obtain a prescription. It is absurd that a civilian can go to a pharmacy 24 hours a day in most cities in America, but VA pharmacies close early on weekdays and completely on the weekends.

I also propose in this action plan that individual VA hospitals undergo peer review from the best in health care: Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic—there is a long line of them—and other top-tier health care networks. I was disappointed that the independent review required by the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act only resulted in a high-level review of the VA health care system. Its findings were so broad and general that they provided Congress with very little guidance on what is happening at individual VA hospitals in our States. By requiring the VA to undergo peer reviews from the best in health care, we will have better insight into how to fully reform the VA health care system.

I intend to include the elements of that action plan in a bill I will introduce in this Congress. By enacting legislation as soon as possible, we can fix the serious inequity in veterans health care. It is absurd to me and many others that virtually every American receives Federal subsidies for choice and

freedom in health care while veterans are forced to wait in line and ask permission from a VA bureaucrat before getting access to care.

I thank my colleagues for working with me on these and other measures that will help finish the work we started nearly 2 years ago with the Veteran Access, Choice and Accountability Act and urge passage of my commonsense reforms as soon as possible.

Before I close, I want to take a moment to applaud the efforts of my friend from Georgia, the chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, JOHNNY ISAKSON, for his leadership, particularly on the issue of accountability at the VA. One of the most disgraceful aspects of the scandal at the VA is that only a small number of senior VA executives responsible for the wait-time scandal were fired. This was despite the fact that Congress provided the VA Secretary broad authority to hold corrupt executives accountable for wrongdoing. I look forward to working with Chairman ISAKSON and my colleagues in the Senate to pass legislation that would ensure we hold all those responsible for denied and delayed care, even the deaths of some, accountable.

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

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

EUREKA ACT

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President and my fellow colleagues, I once again come to the floor to talk about Alzheimer's and the efforts being made in this country and in this Senate and in this city to find a cure and find better treatments for the scourge of Alzheimer's. Many of you know this is the most expensive disease our country has ever seen; one-half trillion dollars a year in costs to programs that we need to protect like Medicare, Medicaid. This will rise to \$1 trillion per year in the lifetime of many people within the sound of my voice unless something is done.

I am so appreciative of the some 1,200 people who descended on Washington this week advocating on behalf of the millions of Americans living with Alzheimer's and their family members. I was honored to be invited to their conference and to speak to over 1,000 people in the hotel where they were meeting earlier this week. They then came to Capitol Hill to visit in the offices of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, and I had a great meeting on Wednesday in my office. We want to reaffirm our dedication to putting an end to this terrible disease. My mom died with dementia. Most of us have family members who have had Alzheimer's or who have been impacted by Alzheimer's.

I appreciate the support of my colleagues in this Congress for NIH funding. It is very important to continue funding, to continue increasing the funding for the excellent work done by the National Institutes of Health to fight Alzheimer's disease and fund Alzheimer's research.

I appreciate my colleagues voting for a \$350 million increase in research for Alzheimer's disease, but of course this falls far short. This is funding that experts say is needed to reach our goal of curing Alzheimer's within the next decade. Along those lines, I have introduced legislation that I think gives us a different way to approach the disease of Alzheimer's. My bill is called the EUREKA Act that involves a prize competition, in addition to everything we are doing in research, everything NIH is doing, and all the research being done around the country. It is a prize competition inviting innovators, inviting people to think outside the box, come forward, and give us their ideas.

EUREKA stands for "Ensuring Useful Research Expenditures is Key for Alzheimer's." Of course, the Greek translation for Eureka is "I found it." That is what we are trying to do—trying to find a cure for Alzheimer's, trying to find milestones that will lead to a cure, and trying to find treatments to help those suffering from the disease.

The goal of my EUREKA Act is to find the best and brightest minds in the country, the best and brightest minds in the world, to come forward and use their ingenuity to solve this complex problem. As I have reiterated in visits with Member after Member, and I have reiterated on the floor, with a prize competition, we pay only for success. Regardless of the amount of money we put on the prize, you don't pay the money until we have success, which is one of the reasons this EUREKA provision wouldn't come out of NIH funding. It would add to it, and we would only pay the money if we got the result, which of course would be far more valuable than the prize.

The numbers associated with Alzheimer's are daunting—even worse, chilling. The disease affects 5 million Americans. The number of people with Alzheimer's is on the rise, as we all know. It is the sixth leading cause of death in America and, again, it is the most expensive disease in America: \$236 billion this year and \$1 trillion per year by the year 2050. Of course, there is a huge burden for the caregivers also.

There is good news, to be sure. It was announced last week that there's been an analysis by UsAgainstAlzheimer's, and it showed some 17 drugs for Alzheimer's could be launched in the next 5 years. In Mississippi, the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson has developed a service called TeleMIND as part of its MIND Center. Telehealth technology is being used to attack Alzheimer's, to treat Alzheimer's patients, and make life better for them and their family.

Let us try the concept of EUREKA also. Let us try the concept of offering

a prize to young minds. Perhaps people from around the world might come to the United States. This might be someone in a basement or in his mom's garage or might be some major international corporation. We don't care. We want to offer an incentive for somebody to come around, think outside the box, and get us to a cure quicker.

Prizes have a history of success. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh achieved a non-stop flight between New York and Paris. He won a prize of \$25,000 in so doing. In 2004, the XPRIZE—sponsored by the XPRIZE Foundation—offered \$10 million for the first reusable manned spacecraft. You know what happened. It drew down \$100 million in investments, this \$10 million prize. In 2011, \$1 million was awarded for a breakthrough in oilspill cleanup. So prizes work. It can work, in addition to the research NIH is doing around the country.

Let me say, in addition to myself as principal sponsor of this act, we now have 39 cosponsors among this 100-person Senate. We are day-by-day, step-by-step getting toward a majority. It is my hope the leadership of the HELP Committee that is now working on the 21st Century Cures Act that came over from the House with an overwhelming bipartisan vote—I hope we can, in a bipartisan fashion, with the leadership of Senator ALEXANDER, with the leadership of Senator MURRAY—his lead Democrat on the committee—I hope we can make a decision to add the EUREKA bill to the 21st Century Cures Act, to have this extra opportunity, in addition to everything we are doing, to cure Alzheimer's.

I would urge my colleagues, I would urge the staff members who might be listening to this, to check and see if their Members have cosponsored this and to help us with an additional tool to attack the problem of Alzheimer's.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. I thank my colleague from Michigan for deferring for a moment or two while I make these remarks.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, it is very hard for me to believe I am once again standing on this floor. I have to come before my colleagues in the Senate to report that despite the fact that we have been building bipartisan support for legislation that will address the catastrophic situation in Flint, we still have one Senator standing in the way of this coming to a vote.

It has been now nearly 2 months since Senator STABENOW and I introduced legislation to deal with the catastrophic crisis in the city of Flint, MI. Since that time, we have been able to build a broad coalition of folks on both sides of the aisle, Republican cosponsors who have joined with us to say it is time for this body, it is time for the Senate, to stand and help those in need in the city of Flint, as well as issues all

across this country. Senator STABENOW and I offered legislation, along with Senator INHOFE, and a long list of Democrats and Republicans, including Senators BURR, CAPITO, KIRK, and PORTMAN, have been working very closely with Senator MURKOWSKI as chair of the committee as well.

Yet we have one Senator, one Senator who says that is not enough. He wants to have more, and he is standing in the way of the people of Flint getting the help they desperately need. He is standing in the way of children like this young infant who appeared on the cover of Time magazine. To me, those eyes are very compelling, and I think those eyes are very compelling to every American who has witnessed what has happened in that city, who has witnessed the horror and the tragedy of having poisoned water going into people's bodies for many months while the State government dropped the ball.

I will say folks around the country have responded. There has been an outpouring of help from people in every corner of this great country of ours. People have sent bottled water. They have sent filters and are providing resources. It is what our country does. It is what our people do when we see people in crisis. We stand and lend that helping hand. We know any one of us at any time could be in that situation. The wonderful thing about being an American is that as Americans we look out for each other. We know we are a community, a very special place in this world, and we look out for each other.

That is why people back home in Michigan—and as I travel around the country—people are at a loss and wondering why the U.S. Congress hasn't done something to address this issue. When I tell them we have legislation that will help deal with infrastructure, not just in Flint but in communities all across the country, that will plus-up public health programs to deal with lead poisoning at a time when we realize lead poisoning is not just an issue for Flint but is an issue for communities all across this country and one we need to focus on and probably ignored for far too long, they wonder why we have not acted. When I tell them we have one Senator—just one Senator—standing in the way, it only adds to their belief that this is a dysfunctional place; that partisanship and polarization have prevented this body from doing what is right.

We can't forget the people of Flint, and I know many of my colleagues on the Senate floor have not. That is why we have been able to get broad support from both Democrats and Republicans, who have come together and said to both my senior Senator, Ms. STABENOW, and me: We understand it is a problem in Flint, but we also understand it is a problem in other communities around the country. Let us design legislation to deal with that.

That is what we have before us. We have legislation that will provide money for those cities that may be in

a declared emergency, which is where we are with the city of Flint, but we also know there may be other communities in this country—in fact, we think there will be a community very soon—that will also have a declared water emergency that will be able to access those funds. We also know aging infrastructure is not unique to the city of Flint. It is with cities all across the country, especially older urban areas that have lead surface lines, but there are certainly many rural areas that have that as well. Those pipes need to be taken out.

In this legislation, we create a fund that will allow money to be loaned to those communities—oftentimes, communities that don't have a lot of resources but desperately need infrastructure improvement. It is a loan fund that will be paid back to the taxpayers but will extend the money necessary to make improvements that truly will be lifesaving improvements for the citizens in those cities.

We also plus-up a number of public health programs from the CDC that deal with lead poisoning in children.

The insidious thing about lead poisoning is that once it gets into the brain of a young child—like this child who is looking at us right now in this picture I have in the Chamber—it has lasting effects. It has lifetime effects. We need not only to embrace that child with our love but understand that the child is going to need health care for decades. That child is going to need educational support to be able to pursue his or her version of the American dream that he or she may have. They are going to need to have, in addition to education and health care, good nutrition, making sure the food they eat will provide their bodies with the nourishment that can counter some of the impacts of lead.

But it is not just the children; it is everybody in the city of Flint. Senior citizens have also been impacted. I have gone door to door in Flint and worked with volunteers, including the American Red Cross, delivering bottled water to the people of Flint. I never thought I would have to go with the American Red Cross to deliver bottled water to a community because the water they were getting out of their pipes was poisoned—not in this country, not in the United States of America. But that is what people are doing, and filters as well are being given door to door.

The people of Flint are appreciative. Please know they are extremely appreciative of the generosity they have seen from people across this country and from FEMA response as well, but they are also frustrated. People can't bathe with bottled water. They are cooking and cleaning food—all of the basic things we take for granted each and every day. It is simply impossible to live just on bottled water and have that bottled water delivered to them every few days. It is not a workable system. It is unacceptable, and it cer-

tainly should be unacceptable to everybody in this country.

That is why we need to have a long-term solution. It has to be a long-term solution that will fix the problem permanently by making sure the infrastructure improvements are there, lead pipes are pulled out, but makes sure other support services are going to be there for decades.

My fear for the people of the city of Flint is that although they have been the beneficiaries of a great outpouring of love and support from people around the country, they have been able to get that because the spotlight has been on Flint and the TV cameras are in Flint. We all know in today's media world that those cameras will eventually go away. There won't be media attention for Flint. There won't be the bright lights of publicity motivating people to do what is needed in the city of Flint. When those lights go down and when it goes dark, the people of the city of Flint will still be confronted with this absolutely catastrophic situation that is impacting them in their homes. It is impacting businesses—businesses that have been rocked as a result of this. People don't want to go to restaurants because they are not sure of the water there. Real estate values have plummeted. This is a different kind of a disaster than a natural disaster if a hurricane goes through or a tornado goes through. Then we can rebuild, and it can be as good as new.

Our concern with Flint is that there will always be this stigma attached to the city as a result of this, and if that stigma is there, it is going to make it even more difficult.

The people of Flint are resilient and courageous and brave and strong. They will survive, but we need to be there to lend that helping hand. That is why it is even more frustrating to me, given the fact that when we have natural disasters across this country, this body—the Senate—acts. We send money. We help those local governments. The State governments provide help.

Now, I know some colleagues have said that this is not a natural disaster, that this is a manmade disaster. All I can say is to ask that child when he or she grows up: Does it make a difference that it was a manmade disaster or a natural disaster? Ask the senior citizen in Flint right now. Ask the parent who is concerned about that child. Does it make any difference? I don't think any American here thinks it makes a difference. There isn't anybody in this country who thinks it makes a difference. A disaster is a disaster.

Now, it is true the State government messed up horribly in Michigan. In fact, the Governor's own task force that he appointed to look into it clearly points the finger at the State of Michigan and the incompetence that was shown by the government of the State of Michigan. That is a given. They are primarily responsible and need to step up, and they have. But they need to do a whole lot more than what they have done so far.

But even though the State has to do that and must do that, that doesn't prevent us, the Federal Government, from also standing up and saying: We can help as well because that is what we do. It is what the American people expect us to do. I certainly hope my colleagues will help Senator STABENOW and I move this legislation forward. If we can't get around this one Senator who wants to constantly move the goalpost, who wants to change the basis of negotiations even though this legislation is completely paid for—we have used a pay-for that Senator STABENOW fought for, authored to help manufacturers in the Midwest. I fought aggressively to keep that fund when I was a Member of the House. This is something that is important to us, but we know that dealing with a catastrophic situation in Flint and water infrastructure across this country so that we don't have any more Flints is more important. That money will be used to help the people of Flint and communities across this country. Not only does it pay for this, but it actually reduces the deficit at the same time.

I think it is important to say that usually when a disaster hits this country, we don't look for pay-fors. We step up and provide money for people in need. We have been asked to come up with a pay-for, and we did—completely paid for while reducing the Federal deficit at the same time. Yet we have one Senator who wants more. He wants more.

I don't know how that one Senator can hold up something that has been able to get this kind of bipartisan support and can hold up something that is so important to this child in this picture. How can you stand in the way? If that one Senator does not like this legislation, that is fine. They can vote against it. But allow the other 99 Senators in this body an opportunity to have their say. That is the way this institution is supposed to work.

I still believe in this institution. I still believe the Senate can do better than allowing one Member to stand in the way of helping this child and other children just like this one.

It is now our task as Members of this body to come together and say: Enough is enough. We are going to help somebody in this country no matter who you are, no matter where you live, no matter the circumstances. If you have been hit by a major disaster, we will stand with you. We will help you. That is who we are as Americans. It goes to the very core of our values.

It is now up to my colleagues here in the Senate to please join Senator STABENOW and me and our long list of both Democratic and Republican cosponsors. Put this legislation on the floor. Let's vote on it, let's pass it, and let's help the people of Flint and other folks all across the country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

TRIBUTE TO TRENT HARMON AND LA'PORSHA
RENAE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I don't know what other Members of the Senate will be doing at 8 p.m. eastern time, but I can tell you I will be in front of my television set watching "American Idol." We all take pride in people from our own States, but I want to boldly predict that the winner of "American Idol" tonight will be a contestant from my State of Mississippi. The reason I am so certain of this is that two talented Mississippians are the two finalists remaining in the "American Idol" competition tonight.

They say this will be the final season of "American Idol." Perhaps we are only going to have a timeout for a few years, and we will see it back. This is the 15th season of "American Idol." I am so proud to announce to my colleagues in the Senate and to the Presiding Officer that the two finalists are none other than Trent Harmon of Amory, MS, and La'Porsha Renae of McComb, MS.

Now, in Mississippi we proudly call ourselves the Birthplace of America's Music, and I think we do that with some justification. From blues to country to rock and roll, our State has produced more Grammy award winners per capita than any other State in the Nation. Elvis Presley comes from Mississippi, as well as Robert Johnson, B.B. King, Jimmie Rodgers, Charley Pride, Faith Hill, and the list goes on and on and on.

Last month, I was honored to participate in the opening of the Grammy Museum in Cleveland, MS. There are now two Grammy museums in the country. One is in Los Angeles and the other is in the Mississippi Delta in Cleveland. The Mississippi Delta is a testament to the many musical inspirations that have emerged there.

In 1986, Paul Simon sang: "The Mississippi Delta is shining like a National guitar." He sang that line 20 years before the first Mississippi Blues Trail marker was placed, but he was correct. We now have some 200 Blues Trail markers across our State, and I invite each and every Member and all the rest of you to come and visit those locations in Mississippi.

But tonight, the entire State of Mississippi will be shining like a national guitar with talents like La'Porsha Renae and Trent Harmon. They are keeping our legacy alive. They represent the wide range of Mississippi's musical influences. It was wonderfully touching to watch the video of their hometown visits, where the people came out to support them, showing off their Mississippi talent and the dedication of their fans.

Trent Harmon is from Amory, MS. He grew up on his family's farm, working in his parents' restaurant, the Longhorn Fish and Steakhouse. Growing up in Amory is truly a small town beginning. The town has a population of around 7,500 people. Trent's interest in music was apparent from early on,

as he spent his time in high school and college performing in musicals. My wife and I have numerous times been to Amory High School to see Trent Harmon perform in programs such as "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," "Forever Plaid," and other performances. He was a star then, and he is going to be a star in the future. Trent's powerful voice and versatility seem effortless. He can do it all, from southern soul to R & B.

La'Porsha Renae comes from McComb, MS, down in the southwestern part of our State. She worked for a call center before auditioning for "American Idol." She has shared with America the details about her story of survival from an abusive relationship in which she had to seek refuge in a women's shelter. Her soulful voice has been compared to Aretha Franklin, and the emotion she pours into every performance is truly show-stopping. She credits her former high school algebra teacher, Angelia Johnson, as one of her biggest mentors who encouraged her to embrace her own signature style. La'Porsha dedicated last night's moving performance of "Diamonds" to her young daughter who was in the audience.

So when it comes to talent, I believe "American Idol" may have saved the best for last, and I very much anticipate a great performance tonight. Millions of Americans will choose one of these outstanding young Mississippians as the latest, but perhaps not the last, "American Idol."

Trent and La'Porsha have made Mississippi proud. They have made me proud, and I wish them all the best tonight and in their future musical careers. I am quite certain that both of them will be incredibly successful.

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

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

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3499, AS MODIFIED; 3508; AND 3505 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up and reported by number: Wyden No. 3499, as modified; Collins No. 3508; and Tester No. 3505.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3499, as modified; 3508; and 3505 to amendment No. 3464.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3499, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To require a review of heads-up guidance system displays)

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2405. HEADS-UP GUIDANCE SYSTEM TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a review of heads-up guidance system displays (in this section referred to as "HGS").

(b) CONTENTS.—The review required by subsection (a) shall—

(1) evaluate the impacts of single- and dual-installed HGS technology on the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations within the national airspace system;

(2) review a sufficient quantity of commercial aviation accidents or incidents in order to evaluate if HGS technology would have produced a better outcome in that accident or incident; and

(3) update previous HGS studies performed by the Flight Safety Foundation in 1991 and 2009.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the results of the review required by subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 3508

(Purpose: To continue the contract weather observers program through the end of fiscal year 2017 and to require the FAA report to identify the process through which the FAA analyzed the safety hazards associated with the elimination of the contract weather observer program)

On page 40, line 15, strike "and" and all that follows through line 25, and insert the following:

(3) indicating how airports can comply with applicable Federal Aviation Administration orders governing weather observations given the current documented limitations of automated surface observing systems; and

(4) identifying the process through which the Federal Aviation Administration analyzed the safety hazards associated with the elimination of the contract weather observer program.

(b) CONTINUED USE OF CONTRACT WEATHER OBSERVERS.—The Administrator may not discontinue the contract weather observer program at any airport until October 1, 2017.

AMENDMENT NO. 3505

(Purpose: To direct the Comptroller General of the United States to study the costs of deploying advanced imaging technologies at all commercial airports at which TSA security screening operations procedures are conducted)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ GAO STUDY OF UNIVERSAL DEPLOYMENT OF ADVANCED IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to redesign airport security areas to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all commercial airports at which security screening operations are conducted by the Transportation Security Administration or through the Screening Partnership Program; and

(2) to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all airports not described in paragraph (1).

(b) **COST ANALYSIS.**—As a part of the study conducted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall identify the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to purchase the equipment and other assets necessary to deploy advanced imaging technologies at each airport;

(2) to install such equipment and assets in each airport; and

(3) to maintain such equipment and assets.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit the results of the study conducted under subsection (a) to the appropriate committees of Congress.

VOTE ON AMENDMENTS NOS. 3499, AS MODIFIED; 3508; 3505; 3495; AND 3458, AS MODIFIED

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now vote on these amendments, as well as the Heller amendment No. 3495 and the Casey-Toomey amendment No. 3458, as modified, en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on these amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendments en bloc.

The amendments (Nos. 3499, as modified; 3508; 3505; 3495; and 3458, as modified) were agreed to en bloc.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. 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.

OBSERVING CONGRESS WEEK

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to call the attention of my colleagues to the 227th anniversary of Congress' first quorum, which the House of Representatives achieved on April 1, 1789, and which the Senate achieved 5 days later. In the first week of April, the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress remembers these milestones by observing Congress Week—an annual celebration which includes commemorative events at member institutions across the country.

The Association of Centers for the Study of Congress is composed of more than 40 universities that work to preserve the historical collections of Members of Congress. The organization's goal is to promote public understanding of the House and the Senate by focusing on the history of Congress and its role in our constitutional system of government. Having served as a member of this body for nearly four decades, I understand well the importance of keeping good records, which is why I am sincerely grateful for the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress and its efforts to help us in this endeavor.

While Presidents have Presidential libraries maintained by the National Archives, we—the Members of Congress—are responsible for preserving our own personal documents. Only by archiving these records will historians, students, and teachers be able to appreciate the vital role that Congress has played in our national history.

As President Pro Tempore, I am committed to upholding the reputation and dignity of this institution. Part and parcel to that effort is preserving the Senate's history. To this end, I strongly encourage my colleagues to keep comprehensive records of their work in Congress. Just as important as writing legislation is maintaining a thorough record of the bills we pass, so that future generations can appreciate the historical importance of our accomplishments.

Serving as a Member of the world's greatest deliberative body is no small honor; it is a tremendous privilege that none of us should take for granted. The American people have placed their confidence in our ability to effect meaningful change for the good of the country. May we honor this sacred trust by keeping detailed archives of the work we do here.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-14, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$200 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J. W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosure.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-14

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$0 million.

Other \$200 million.

Total \$200 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has requested a possible sale of three years of support services by the United States Military Training Mission to Saudi Arabia (USMTM). USMTM is the Security Cooperation Organization (SCO) responsible for identifying, planning, and executing U.S. Security Cooperation training and advisory support for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Defense.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Army (ABT, Basic Case).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: SR-B-ABS-A01; \$90M; implemented 30 Dec 13.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 17, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—Support Services

The Government of Saudi Arabia has requested a possible sale of support services by the United States Military Training Mission to Saudi Arabia (USMTM). USMTM is the Security Cooperation Organization (SCO) responsible for identifying, planning, and executing U.S. Security Cooperation training and advisory support for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Defense. The estimated cost is \$200 million.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of an important partner which has been and continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

This proposed sale will provide the continuation of Technical Assistance Field Teams (TAFT) and other support for USMTM services to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The proposed sale supports the United States' continued commitment to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's security and strengthens U.S.-Saudi Arabia strategic partnership. Sustaining the USMTM supports Saudi Arabia in deterring hostile action and increases U.S.-Saudi Arabia military interoperability. Saudi Arabia will have no difficulty absorbing this support.

The proposed sale will not alter the basic military balance in the region. It will support Combatant Command initiatives in the region by enabling Saudi Arabia's efforts to combat aggression and terrorism.

There is no prime contractor associated with this proposed sale. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will approve the permanent or temporary assignment of up to 202 case-funded U.S. Government or contractor personnel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. Defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.