

Let me tell you what we found so far in the brief history of this new USDA program. We found that catfish coming in from Vietnam was adulterated. I can hardly pronounce these words, but I have here a publication from Food Chemical News dated today, May 23. It reports that according to the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, they have already found two shipments that have just come in in recent weeks that were adulterated. This is Vietnamese catfish that the U.S. Department of Agriculture caught that would have been consumed by American consumers in restaurants and would have been bought at supermarkets. They wouldn't let it in. They sent it back. Thank heavens they did because one shipment contained gentian crystal violet, so they didn't allow it to come in. That is the kind of inspection this vote tomorrow will try to stop. I want to keep those inspections. The other shipment that was not allowed in contained malachite green, and it contained enrofloxacin and fluoroquinolone—all chemicals and substances that are prohibited to be consumed in the United States because they are not safe. They contain heavy metals, they contain carcinogens, and they contain illegal antibiotics that we are trying to protect U.S. consumers from.

I will give credit to the authors of this resolution of disapproval: This would somewhat cut the price of fish in restaurants. But I will tell you what. If my colleagues want to foist less expensive catfish that contains heavy metals, antibiotics, and carcinogens off on American consumers, let them have at it. I don't think the majority of the Senate wants to do that in the name of a duplicative program—and it is not duplicative—and in the name of reducing costs when the whole program costs about \$1 million a year.

I want my colleagues to be aware that this vote is going to come up tomorrow. It is a very unusual vote. It is a Congressional Review Act vote. Thirty of my colleagues have signed a petition, so it must come to a vote, and it must come tomorrow afternoon. The vote to proceed will take place tomorrow afternoon. If the motion to proceed is agreed to—and I certainly hope it is not—then we will have 10 hours of debate right here in the middle of the week when we should be talking about national defense and all of the issues that really trouble Americans. We have 10 hours of debate, according to the law, on whether the regulation should go forward.

I hope we will simply vote against the motion to proceed tomorrow. That way, under the Congressional Review Act, that will be the end of the matter and the Department of Agriculture can keep inspecting and keep protecting American consumers.

Americans should be aware this is coming up, and my colleagues and their staff should get schooled in this rather obscure issue.

Should the resolution pass, we will have the very unusual and unworkable situation of the farm bill still being the law of the land, of the Department of Agriculture still being the agency in charge of inspections. That will still be the law; we simply won't have a rule allowing that part of the bill to be implemented. So, in effect, since the FDA inspection regime has ended, according to law, we will have no inspection whatsoever. That is my understanding of the result should the resolution of disapproval be approved. I don't think it will be approved. I think we will stand tomorrow for consumer protection and for applying the laws of consumer safety and food safety evenly and across the board.

So I urge a "no" vote tomorrow on the motion to proceed.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here to thank my colleagues for their strong, overwhelming, bipartisan support for the Sexual Assault Survivors' Bill of Rights, an act that I have been proud to help lead and champion, along with my colleagues, Senators SHAHEEN and LEAHY. It is a cause that I championed as a prosecutor and law enforcer in my State, as the Federal prosecutor, U.S. attorney, and then as our attorney general in the State of Connecticut. It is a cause that deserves this kind of overwhelming, bipartisan support because for too long survivors of sexual assault have been denied the basic care and rights they need and deserve, and for too long they have been victimized twice—first by an assailant who fundamentally violated their rights and then by the court system and a law enforcement system that failed to respect and recognize their need for those rights to be enforced effectively.

When a survivor of sexual assault engages the criminal justice system, she must be secure, absolutely confident and trusting in her rights and empowered to make informed decisions. Reporting sexual assault requires incredible courage, bravery beyond the imagination of many who fail to understand how much courage is required, and too often the system fails to respect those rights. She deserves a system that is worthy of that bravery.

Too often, survivors are simply uninformed about what is happening, not told about basic evidence and proceedings, and they find that vital evidence was destroyed without their consent or encounter Byzantine procedural barriers to justice. That is wrong.

This bill represents important steps toward a system that mirrors unsparing prosecution of people who commit these heinous offenses with sensitive and fair treatment of survivors.

Currently, depending on the jurisdiction, there are a wide array of different practices and procedures. Sexual assault victims often experience a complex and cryptic maze of policies that deter those survivors from pursuing justice.

This legislation will address unique challenges faced by sexual assault survivors, particularly regarding notice, access, and preservation of evidence. The preservation of evidence is particularly important because the sexual assault evidence collection kits are absolutely vital to justice and successful prosecution.

This bill would empower survivors to make more informed decisions throughout the criminal justice process by supporting State efforts to better notify survivors of available resources as well as applicable State rights and policies.

Finally, the bill will establish a joint Department of Justice and Health and Human Services working group to more effectively implement best practices regarding the care and treatment of survivors across the country—a beacon of information and leadership from the Federal Government to assure that sexual assault survivors are treated with the respect they need and deserve. It is that simple.

This legislation does not address every barrier faced by victims of sexual assault. There is no question that more action is needed. To achieve that, State and local governments must follow suit and must create a culture, a changed culture of compassion for people who have experienced this heinous crime. It is a crime, and it should be treated as one of the most serious and outrageous crimes that anyone can commit. Today the Senate has sent a message that we side with survivors. We are on their side. We will do everything in our power to lighten the burden and pain they bear and help them seek both justice and healing, which they truly deserve.

I thank my great friends and colleagues Senator SHAHEEN and Senator LEAHY for their leadership on this issue. I have been proud to join with them. I thank the Connecticut groups CONNSACS, the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, and the many leaders in Connecticut who have made our State such an important engineer of progress in this area.

Again, it is a journey that must be continued. The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women has done great work and provided important leadership in this area. I thank Amanda Nguyen for her courage and hard work to make this day a reality. All of my colleagues who joined today in supporting this measure can be proud of the work we have done, the leadership we have shown, and the bipartisanship it took.

I yield the floor.

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

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

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the Senate continues to debate funding priorities for the American people in the coming year, I want to take a moment to recognize the importance of supporting our Nation's seniors. May is Older Americans Month. This is a time to recognize our responsibility to expand resources for the elderly and a moment to acknowledge the important role older Americans play in contributing to our country's livelihood and development.

Older Americans Month has been recognized annually since 1963, when President Kennedy designated May as Senior Citizens Month to honor the dedication of seniors to our communities. At that time, just 17 million Americans had reached their 65th birthday, with over one-third of all seniors living in poverty. With few programs to support their needs, President Kennedy pledged to highlight elderly contributions to society in order to strengthen such services.

This year's Older American's Month theme is "Blaze a Trail," aimed at raising awareness about the many issues facing seniors today. From high health care costs, to the availability of healthy foods in vulnerable communities, our Nation's seniors deserve the resources they need to enjoy these richer years.

Last month, the President signed the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act into law, marking the end of a 5-year long debate on how to reauthorize crucial programs for seniors in underserved communities. For decades, the Older Americans Act has strengthened community assistance for seniors, including through transportation, caregiver support, nutrition, and home-based aid. I am pleased the reauthorization remains steadfast in supporting these initiatives, and includes stronger protections for elder rights, while expanding disability and long-term care programs.

But we cannot stop there. We must take this as an opportunity to underscore the importance of promoting senior services across all sectors. That means coming together as a Congress to produce solutions for long-term sustainability in Social Security and Medicare. It means expanding access to healthy foods across communities, including in hospitals and senior-care facilities. This means supporting caregivers and families who take time out of their lives to provide for their loved ones. And it means ensuring that cost of living adjustments are fairly calculated to account for senior expenses year after year.

We all have a stake in promoting the livelihood of our Nation's elderly, whether it be for our own families or for the children of future generations. Let us be reminded this May that supporting older Americans is not just a matter of fairness, but a commonsense solution to promoting the wellbeing of our Nation at large.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

ADAM WALSH REAUTHORIZATION BILL

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today the Senate voted on S. 2613, the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act. This legislation would extend two key programs that Congress established a decade ago to standardize and strengthen registration and monitoring of sex offenders nationwide. I support this bill because it has critical provisions that law enforcement officers need in order to protect our children from harm, and I would have voted in favor of it if I were present for the vote.

In 2006, Congress passed and the President signed into law the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. The Adam Walsh Act, which was named for a 6-year old who was tragically murdered in 1981, established nationwide notification and registration standards for those convicted of sex offenses. The Adam Walsh Act created a Federal grant program to assist State and local law enforcement to implement registration systems and locate those who fail abide by registration requirements.

The Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act would reauthorize the Sex Offender Management Assistance Program, a Federal program that assists State and local law enforcement agencies in their efforts to improve sex offender registry systems and information-sharing capabilities. The bill would also reauthorize the Jessica Lunsford Address Verification Grant Program, a Federal program that assists States and local law enforcement agencies in their efforts to verify the residence of all or some registered sex offenders. The reauthorization of these critical programs would provide law enforcement with the tools they need to keep our communities safe.

I would have voted in favor this legislation today because it helps combat child predators by giving law enforcement officials the tools they need to catch these dangerous individuals and convict them. It takes a comprehensive network of law enforcement agencies on the Federal, State, and local levels working together to ensure compliance and locate sex offenders, and that is what this bill would do. I also support this legislation because it would tighten our sex offender registration system and better track registered sex offenders, which helps to protect our children from harm. I also recognize that this legislation has the support of the Na-

tional Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Nation's foremost missing children's clearinghouse.

Despite my support for this legislation, I do have concerns with some sex offender registration systems. First, more research is needed to assess whether or not sex offender registries actually improve the safety of the public. Some research has concluded that sex registries have no demonstrable effect in reducing sex re-offenses and often registered sex offenders have higher rates of recidivism. While our men and women in uniform believe they need this tool to combat sex offenses, Congress should not rubber-stamp Federal programs in the absence of hard data that demonstrates their effectiveness in keeping us safe.

I am also concerned that sex offender programs undermine rehabilitation because they present significant barriers to reintegration into the community. Requiring youth who are adjudicated in juvenile court of sex offenses to register as a sex offender is counter-productive to the goal of the juvenile justice system, which is designed to protect youth from lifelong penalties carried by the adult criminal justice system. The top priority of our government must be to protect the public; but one-size-fits-all solutions do not achieve that end.

Despite my concerns, I would have voted in favor of the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act today because I believe it provides law enforcement with the tools they need to keep people safe. I am committed to working with law enforcement to make sure they receive the support they need from Congress to effectively do their jobs. However, Congress must do its job by ensuring that the programs we endorse have the research to support them. That effort is critical to both keeping the public safe and to ensuring that our justice system is fair for all Americans.●

NATIONAL MARITIME DAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, yesterday, May 22, 2016, our Nation celebrated National Maritime Day. The United States has always been and will always be a great maritime nation. My home State of Louisiana ranks first in the Nation in economic impact from America's domestic maritime industry. The American Maritime Partnership shows Louisiana's 54,850 maritime jobs pump more than \$11.3 billion annually into our economy. America's robust domestic maritime industry includes vessel operators, marine terminals, shipyards, and workers engaged in the movement of cargo exclusively within the United States.

According to a study commissioned by the Transportation Institute and conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, PwC, Louisiana also ranks first in the country in maritime jobs per capita, with 1 in every 83 jobs connected to the State's domestic maritime industry, nearly twice that of any other State.