

“well qualified” by the American Bar Association—the highest rating possible. By any measure, he is exactly the type of fairminded, consensus nominee the Senate should be considering for the vacancy. But Judge Garland can’t make his case to the American people because Senator GRASSLEY refuses to even hold a hearing on the nomination. Chairman GRASSLEY has come up with a myriad of excuses to block the nomination, none of which hold water. As the Des Moines Register said recently, “Grassley’s excuses are purely political.”

Iowans aren’t being fooled. They know that the chairman’s real goal is holding the Supreme Court open for Donald Trump to do with what he wants. The Judiciary chairman has already said Trump would “appoint the right type of people”—boy, I will tell you, that must be a real stretch—“the right type of people” to the Supreme Court. The senior Senator from Iowa obviously places a high value on Trump’s judgment, which has proven to be so good the last year. Senator GRASSLEY is holding a Supreme Court vacancy for a man who accused an Indiana-born judge of being unable to do his job because of his racial heritage. His parents came from Mexico. Apparently he would like to see that brand of thinking brought to the Nation’s courts.

It is time for Senator GRASSLEY to stop playing politics with his committee and give Judge Garland a fair hearing. It is time for his committee to address the numerous lower court vacancies and damaging judicial emergencies throughout the country. The American people deserve a functioning judicial system led by the Judiciary Committee in the Senate. They have had enough with Republican excuses. Iowans and the Nation are waiting. It is time for Senator GRASSLEY and Senate Republicans to do their job.

Mr. President, I would ask the Chair to announce what the Senate is going to do the rest of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2016—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11

a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, pending before the Senate is an important bill. It is a bill that relates to the opioid epidemic in America—an epidemic which is linked directly to the heroin epidemic in America and the sad reality of the deaths that are occasioned by heroin overdoses.

The prescription opioid and heroin epidemic claimed 28,647 American lives in 2014—1,652 in my State of Illinois. That is a 30-percent increase in just 4 years.

I have seen this devastation firsthand. I have sat with parents who have lost their kids. I have met with young teenagers who were addicted. Thank goodness that some of them have been able—with treatment, counseling, and strength—to fight off that addiction.

The reality is obvious. This narcotics epidemic is not an inner city problem. It is an American problem. It is a problem that not only touches the inner cities of America, but it also touches every other community. There is no town too small, no suburb too wealthy to escape the opioid and heroin epidemic.

I have been across my State, from one end to the other, at roundtables with law enforcement, with medical professionals, with those who do addiction treatment and with those who have lived through these addictions. I have seen firsthand what it has done to communities and families and lives. We need a forceful response, and we are going to vote on one in about an hour. It is called the CARA bill. It is a bill that moves us in the right direction when it comes to dealing with this addiction.

The conference report has many important elements to it, and that is why I am going to support it. It includes my proposal to require reforms at the FDA, or the Food and Drug Administration, to ensure better oversight of dangerous and addictive opioid drugs before they are approved for sale in our country. My provisions will ensure the FDA convenes scientific advisory committees before approving new opioid drugs and that the Pediatric Advisory Committee has a voice in the decision.

We require the FDA to consider the public health impacts before allowing more addictive products to come onto the market. We direct Federal health agencies to develop plans for continuing medical education with doctors and other providers who prescribe opioids. We require the FDA to encourage drug companies to make abuse-deterrent formulations of these dangerous drugs.

The CARA conference report also includes a proposal I have worked on to improve State prescription drug monitoring programs. This legislation will make it easier for States to share information about overprescribing and overusing opioids, it gives doctors more information to better perform their prescribing practices.

I am pleased the CARA conference report includes new grant programs to expand access to naloxone—the life-saving anecdote—to promote treatment alternatives instead of arrests for those suffering from addiction and to create flexibility and treatment options for those who need medication-assisted therapy or pregnant women who need specialized care.

Having said all of these positive things about what we are to vote on, let me state the obvious. When only 12 percent of the people in Illinois are able to receive care for their addiction, and there is a 12-week wait at facilities for vulnerable patients to get into drug treatment, authorizing new programs, which this bill does, is good but not good enough. We need to make an investment. We need to put taxpayers’ dollars behind this commitment to end this epidemic, and it is needed now.

That is why Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire offered an amendment during the Senate floor consideration of this bill. Her amendment would have put \$600 million into actually making the bill work, enforcing it, investing in it. It failed.

During the CARA conference meetings, Senator MURRAY and Congressman PALLONE offered amendments to ensure that Congress would put some money into the promise of this bill. They couldn’t get it passed in a conference dominated by the Republican majority. Why? Why would these efforts be blocked when the Republicans are joining us and saying this is a national problem that deserves our immediate attention? Because Republicans have said they have already proposed to increase funding in appropriation bills to take care of this. Yet many Republicans are supporting a continuing resolution that freezes funding at this year’s level and provides for no increase in opioid epidemic treatment. When they say they are going to put more money in and then call for a continuing resolution, they know and we know that it is a sham.

The Republicans are opposing an increase in funding for this bill by saying they already proposed increased funding in another bill, but at the same time they are advocating a freeze, or flat-funding a continuing resolution. They can’t have it both ways.

It is confusing, but those of us who live in this world know what they are up to. They want to take the credit for passing this bill and the promise of funding it in the future into the election in November but not provide the money that is needed to make it work. That is playing games with people’s lives. America deserves better.

Failing to provide the dollars today is not going to help those who are currently suffering. It is not going to help that mother who was awake all last night worrying about a son or a daughter who is facing an addiction, praying they can get that child they love into treatment in time to break that addiction and save their lives.

You know what else is missing from this CARA conference report? Many of these measures in the bill deal with addiction after it has taken hold. We have to do things to prevent addiction on the front end. The best way is to ensure people don't get addicted in the first place. I have introduced the Addiction Prevention and Responsible Opioid Practices Act, or the A-PROP Act. It is going to help shut off the spigot for fueling this crisis.

Here is something most people don't understand or realize. The Drug Enforcement Administration sounds like the kind of law enforcement agency that polices America to reduce the likelihood that narcotics are going to be found in our homes, in our neighborhoods, in our communities, and in our States. It also has another responsibility. Each year pharma, the major pharmaceutical companies, comes to this agency and asks for the approval to make even more narcotics. These are prescription narcotics like opioids. The DEA has to sign off on this increase in production each year.

If we are going to take a look at the seriousness of this opioid problem and its growth in America, take a look at the growth of production in America that has been approved by this Federal agency. Between 1993 and 2015, the Drug Enforcement Administration-approved quotas for oxycodone increased almost 40 times. In 1993, they were producing about 3½ tons of these opioid pills. Now they are producing 150 tons of these opioid pills.

The DEA has approved pharma to produce enough opioid narcotic pills to provide—listen closely—every adult in America a 1-month prescription each year to opioid narcotics—every adult in America. That goes way beyond any medical need. It is pharma's effort to make more money and to feed the beast of this opioid epidemic, and DEA each year gives the seal of approval. That is wrong.

Once these pills are produced, it takes a doctor or a dentist or some other authorized medical professional to prescribe them. How they are making it through that process onto the streets and into the homes of America is the next question beyond this DEA approval of pharma's overproduction.

We need continuing medical education to be mandated. Incidentally, DEA approves doctors to give them the authority and power to prescribe narcotics. They can monitor this, as well, and see where the abuse is taking place. We need an all-hands-on-deck approach to this epidemic. Each stakeholder needs to play a role.

I am going to vote for this CARA conference report. On its face, it is hard to vote against, but I want to do it with the knowledge of having said in this statement on the floor that it isn't enough. Unless we pass Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN's amendment, unless we follow up on Senator PATTY MURRAY's amendment in conference and fund this effort to stop this epidemic, we are ba-

sically sending a very nice greeting to America that we recognize the problem but we are not paying to solve it. People across America understand this epidemic. It is time for us to take it seriously, not for political posturing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, let me thank my colleague from Illinois for his remarks on the funding issue. I couldn't agree more.

There is no question that this body should be working to help curb opioid abuse in this country, to improve mental health services, to improve the way we treat addiction and speed up recovery. Everyone in this Chamber knows it. But the bill before us, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, is woefully insufficient for dealing with the opioid and heroin crisis. It makes a whole lot of changes, but it doesn't support a single one with new resources.

It would authorize block grants to States to treat people who are hooked on these dangerously addictive prescription painkillers, but it doesn't provide any actual money to give. It would authorize programs to help law enforcement crack down on this scourge, but it doesn't provide a single plugged nickel to our cops.

Without actual appropriations, this bill is like a Hollywood movie set—something that appears real on the surface but has no substance and no life behind its facade. Let me say that again. Without actual appropriations, this bill is like a Hollywood movie set—something that appears real on the surface but has no substance and no life behind its false facade.

I want to clear one thing up. I have heard many of my Republican colleagues say that we should pass this bill, and we can just fill in the money later. Forgive me for being skeptical that they will actually follow through on that promise, because my friends on the other side of the aisle have been fighting for years to cut, not increase, the exact same programs they are now touting in this bill—what a sham.

With the rise of the tea party, the hard-right conservative factions in the House and Senate brought devastating proposed cuts to the health programs that combat the opioid problem, and my colleagues here who are not members of the tea party went along. Now that there is an opioid crisis, now that some are worried about reelection, oh, they are out there. Where were they last year and the year before? Where are they going to be this year in terms of actually getting some funding?

Last year, Republicans proposed billions of dollars in cuts to the Labor-HHS appropriations bill—the main funding source for substance abuse treatment. Without the bipartisan budget agreement, this would have cut \$9 billion. In fact, the Senate Appropriations Committee proposed cutting the Substance Abuse and Mental

Health Services Administration, or SAMHSA, by \$160 million before Democrats pushed to restore it. We didn't hear much of an outcry from the very same people who are out there saying they are doing things on opioids.

On the other side of the Capitol, the tea party Republicans have gone even further. In 2012, they proposed cutting SAMHSA by \$283 million. The latest PAUL RYAN budgets—the holy grail of Republican fiscal austerity—took a meat cleaver to this agency. He proposed cutting an estimated \$400 million from SAMHSA in 2013 and 2014.

The Republican record on actually funding these programs is, frankly, abysmal. When you hear treatment centers and when you hear law enforcement say that we don't have the resources to do what we need to do to go after the opioid crisis, ask yourself why, because our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have fought increases in funding.

You can't have an additional counselor. I have held parents in my arms who said: My son or daughter didn't make it as they were waiting in line for treatment. There were not enough counselors, not enough slots. I have talked to law enforcement officials who say they want to do much more, but their hands are tied because they don't have enough cops, enough intelligence, enough follow-through on going after these evil drug dealers who are just despicable.

We want to say to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle that what they probably would have done to us is to block this bill so we should have no accomplishments. That is what happened in 2013 and 2014. We are not going to do that. This has a few good things, but it is not close to enough.

The way the appropriations process has proceeded this session, I see no reason to believe how any of this is going to change. So far the majority has been utterly unable to pass bills that contain increases in funding. Why? Why wouldn't good people here who say they want to fight opioids and come home and talk about it do it? I will tell you why. Because the hard right has a stranglehold. They say no increase in funding for anything, except maybe Defense, and even a lot of the hard right people don't want that. Everyone goes along. They are afraid of the Koch brothers, who want to cut, cut, cut. They are afraid of the Heritage Foundation that wants to cut, cut, cut, and so they give speeches and even pass a bill that makes some small improvements, but they don't get the funding. It is not that they are malicious, but they don't have the courage and strength to stand up and do what is needed, and then they are hypocritical when they go back and say they are leading the fight to go after opioid addiction. That is the problem here. After years of opposing funding for mental health and substance abuse programs, no one should believe that Republicans are going to honor their promises

about CARA—yeah, down the road we will find some funding—until we see it.

Shortly the Senate will pass this bill. As soon as that happens, Republican Senators are going to run home to tout its passage as if they have single-handedly solved the opioid crisis in this country, but that will not be true. They will not mention that the bill has no funding and doesn't have the teeth it needs; they will not tell people that it doesn't include a dime for a new treatment bed, a dollar for a drug counselor's salary, or the needed increases in money for law enforcement. What it says is this: that colleagues on the other side of the aisle are more interested in showing voters they are doing something about opioids than actually doing something because they are constricted by a small, narrow, but powerful group of special interests in their party that say you can't vote for any increases in funding for anything, and it is a shame. This is an issue ripe for bipartisan compromise. It is an issue in which we can and must make real progress, but as it stands, this bill doesn't get the job done.

Every day 2,500 teenagers in America abuse prescription drugs for the first time. These are our kids, our neighbors, and our friends. We all know families that have had the anguish—and the joy that some have had as their sons and daughters have recovered. But everyone who knows people who have been fighting addiction—whether it is alcohol or prescription drug abuse or some other substance—knows that every day is a struggle and a fight. You are never sure that they will not go back. And then there are those who have lost kids. Sometimes their kids are just out on the streets, and their family doesn't know where they are, and some of them, of course, are gone. It is nothing we should be playing games with, and a small group of hard-right ideologues shouldn't be blocking change in America. We don't need a bill designed for campaign rhetoric. We need resources.

I strongly urge my Republican colleagues to schedule a vote on legislation that provides robust funding to address the opioid and heroin epidemic as soon as possible. Until we pass the increase in resources for law enforcement and treatment, both of which are so necessary, we cannot say that Congress has done what is necessary to solve and fight the opioid crisis.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that any time spent in quorum calls prior to 11 a.m. be equally divided.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, 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.

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

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This bill represents an important step in tackling the growing crisis of prescription drug and heroin addiction in this country. I thank my colleagues, especially the original sponsors of this bill. Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator PORTMAN, Senator AYOTTE, and I have worked together on this legislation for a number of years.

Drug overdoses from opioids now claim more lives than car accidents every year. That is a pretty shocking statistic that I don't think most Americans would expect. The crisis is ripping apart families from all different backgrounds, and with deaths increasing nearly sixfold since the year 2000, it is a crisis on the rise. This deadly trend struck at the heart of Minnesota. Last year alone, 336 Minnesotans died after overdosing on opioids.

Since I started working on this bill, I have heard from people in communities across my State. In Montevideo, 12-year-olds were courted by pushers who said: Hey, kids. If you go in and check your parents' medicine cabinets—I'll give you a list—and bring us their prescription drugs, we will give you a can of beer. That happened in Montevideo, MN.

Shelly Elkington shared her tragic story. Her daughter, Casey Jo, was a champion swimmer and hoped to study nursing like her mom, but in 2008 she was diagnosed with Crohn's disease, and that is when she started taking opioids for pain relief. As we know, four out of five heroin users started out by misusing prescription pain killers, and in the end the very pills that were supposed to ease Casey Jo's pain didn't work. She became addicted and eventually turned to heroin and other drugs, and basically this addiction hijacked her life. She is no longer with us.

This is the story for far too many people. In one 7,000-person town in Minnesota, 3 young people died of opioid overdoses in just 6 months in 2013.

Our final bill includes a number of proven strategies to help States and local communities in the fight against addiction, and one of the most important provisions in it for me is looking at solutions for unused prescription drugs. Senator CORNYN and I passed a bill back in 2010 and finally got the rules out after advocating for them from the DEA, I believe for 4 years, and we are finally starting to see some pharmacies, such as Walgreens, voluntarily taking back unused prescription drugs. This bill helps to build on that work.

CARA also increases the availability of naloxone, which we know can be used in overdoses, and, of course, one of the most important things in this bill is a start at prescription drug monitoring. I emphasize that it is a start because I think a lot more needs to be

done with prescription drug monitoring. I would have liked to have done it in this bill, but now we need to move on and get something done.

Today, I will be introducing a bill with Senator KING and Senator MANCHIN to actually do something about prescription drug monitoring, and that is requiring individual States to put in place prescription drug monitoring programs and actually submit the data. I have learned—having Hazelden in my State—that some States have a program, but it just means doctors have to sign up. It doesn't actually mean that they actually record information or that they share it with other doctors. It doesn't even mean they share it between States. Our bill would require States that receive Federal funding to combat opioid abuse to ensure that their prescription drug monitoring complies with certain standards so that we can crack down on this addiction before it starts. It would require prescribers to consult with the PDMPs before they hand out prescriptions, require dispensers to report back within 24 hours of distribution, and would provide for the proactive notification of health care professionals when patterns indicative of opioid abuse are detected. For people who travel across State lines, it would also require States to share information.

Here is an example: There was a patient at Hazelden Betty Ford who had 108 prescriptions for painkillers filled by more than 85 different prescribers. Think about that: 85 different medical professionals had prescribed these drugs.

I met a rehab guy up in Moorhead who had a patient with a similar story, who had filled prescriptions from doctors in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. That is what is going on. If we don't require States to share information with other States, it is as if we don't really have a prescription drug program to begin with.

CARA is an important bill, but there are two things that we need to change in order to improve the work we are doing in Congress. No. 1 is the money for treatment that I know Senator SCHUMER just addressed, which is in Senator SHAHEEN's bill, which would appropriate emergency funding and, second, not just say we are doing something about prescription drug monitoring but actually do something about prescription drug monitoring, and that is why I am introducing this bill today.

There is a lot of work ahead, but I want to conclude my remarks by acknowledging the major step we are taking by passing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and sending it to the President's desk to be signed into law.

I thank my colleagues for their support.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I continue to be concerned by the determination of a number of people to move through the Senate the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal, the 5,554-page document, which the American people have clearly rejected and do not favor, even though powerful forces continue to push for it. It has been reported that both Presidential candidates oppose it; however, it does appear that Secretary Clinton's opposition is in doubt, and there was a troubling report yesterday.

Her top Asia policy adviser, who served as her Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, Kurt Campbell, told an Australian news outlet that Clinton's opposition to TPP is not real. He said: "Every trade agreement goes through the deepest, darkest tunnel before it is ultimately passed." Her top adviser is saying to our Australian allies that it is going to pass, and that is contrary to what she has been telling the American people. In fact, I think it is fair to say that the worst-kept secret in Washington is that Hillary Clinton, if elected, intends—in some way and some fashion—to see that the TPP becomes law. She made 45 different statements during her time before this lawless agreement was being negotiated—up to the very end of Congressional debate over fast track—that she supported it. This statement by her top adviser is not only shocking but really confirms the fears that so many people have had—that her opposition to the TPP on the campaign trail is a result of the pressure of the voters and is not a real conversion.

After voicing her support for the 5,554-page agreement 45 times before running for President, and after refusing to take a position on it when asked about it for months during her campaign, she has since made statements to the American people that she opposes the agreement. Her senior policy advisor is overseas touting the benefits of TPP. Just as her email scandal problem proves, Mrs. Clinton tends to say one thing to the American people but another thing to her globalist friends.

The TPP creates a 12-country Pacific union, whereby each country gets a single vote. This will allow the union to legislate and change its own rules. It is described as a living agreement. They can even change their own rules. They can pass laws and regulations that make it very difficult—virtually impossible—for the American people to have control over it. It is going to be very difficult to contain this union where each country gets one vote. The United States gets one vote. The Sultan of Brunei gets one vote. Vietnam gets one vote. This makes no sense. We absolutely should not pass this massive agreement that erodes the economic strength of America, giving our competitors the same votes on important issues as we have.

Even the rosiest Trans-Pacific Partnership projections cited by the Obama

administration estimate that this agreement—their own estimate is it will slow the growth of manufacturing in the United States and cost us 120,000 manufacturing jobs over the next 15 years. But other studies show the United States could lose much more. A Tufts University study said we could lose 400,000 jobs. That is their analysis of it.

Secretary Clinton's adviser, Kurt Campbell, and other expansive trade advocates always believe in these free-trade agreements no matter what is in them. They seem to remain oblivious to the impacts that such a massive trade deal will have on the already-struggling economy and middle America. Mr. Campbell's statements are further confirmation that the Obama administration and Hillary Clinton have not given up on this deal. Indeed, President Obama continues to push for it openly and without apology. They fully intend to do everything they can to sneak the TPP through Congress, with perhaps some cosmetic changes to say they have fixed the problem, after the election—most likely during the lame-duck session of the House or the Senate—when many Members are no longer accountable to the American people, or it could be even in the next Congress.

While talking with the newspaper *The Australian*, the former Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Campbell, also found time to denigrate and talk bad about the presumptive nominee of one of our national parties, Donald Trump. *The Australian* reported that the former Australian Foreign Minister has written that Mr. Campbell "will be Secretary of State if Mrs. Clinton becomes the President at the end of the year." Well, that is the first I have heard of that. We learned that maybe from *Australia*.

I believe this is another example of the kind of political duplicity that irritates, frustrates, and angers—legitimately—the American people. They have their leader saying one thing, promising one thing during the election season, all the while they are working to advance a different agenda entirely.

It is the same about fixing illegal immigration. They always promise it during the campaign, but when we get in the Senate and start actually voting on the things that would be necessary to create a lawful system of immigration that protects the national interests, it never seems to happen.

So it is pretty clear Hillary Clinton really supports the TPP. It was only an election-cycle diversion that caused her to back off of it, and she refuses to rule out its passage entirely. The media should demand that she clarify her position. Why will she not rule out passing it? Does her top adviser to Asia, meeting with Asian nations that would participate in this TPP—does he speak for her or not?

As quoted by *PolitiFact*, Mrs. Clinton said: "I waited until it had actu-

ally been negotiated"—she is explaining why she now opposes it when she supported it previously. She said: "I waited until it had actually been negotiated because I did want to give the benefit of the doubt to the (Obama) administration. Once I saw the outcome, I opposed it."

Well, that was not a very satisfactory answer to me at the time. I was very uneasy about that conversion to opposition, and now we have her top adviser to Asia saying something entirely different.

This is what the *Australian* newspaper said about him and this agreement. He says that—he did acknowledge globalization has sometimes been disruptive to politics, disruptive in countries like the United States. He is talking about disruptive for jobs and workers in the United States. I think he is certainly correct about that.

How did *PolitiFact* analyze Mrs. Clinton's statements? Here are some of the things they reported in their analysis. "Once I saw what the outcome was, I opposed it."

That is a pretty clear statement, it appears.

Speaking in *Australia* in 2012, however, she hailed the deal as "setting the gold standard."

She said: "This TPP sets the gold standard in trade agreements to open, free, transparent, fair trade, the kind of environment that has the rule of law and a level playing field."

It seems to me to be a total commitment to supporting the trade deal.

Remember, as Secretary of State, she is the chief diplomatic official for the United States. The Trade Representative does most of the negotiations, but the Secretary of State is involved in these negotiations. It involved the economic relationship of the United States with 11 other Pacific nations. So she knows what is going on in these negotiations and should be well aware of them. If she wasn't, she was not doing her job.

Hillary Clinton's support for the TPP goes on as she said that it would create "Better jobs with higher wages and safer working conditions, including for women, migrant workers and others too often in the past excluded from the formal economy will help build Asia's middle class and rebalance the global economy."

Well, I don't have any doubt that if this trade agreement is like the other trade agreements—and I believe it is—it will definitely help Asian trade competitors of ours. The question is, who is representing the American people? That is whom our legal, moral, and political responsibility is to—the American people. Is it going to be a better transaction for them or not? They don't think so, I don't think so, and a growing number of economists are beginning to understand why these trade deals I have so often supported in the past are not working effectively.

PolitiFact reported in October that she also described this trade deal over

time as “exciting, innovative, ambitious, groundbreaking, cutting-edge, high-quality, and high-standard.” That is the way she has described it over the years.

PolitiFact concludes with this: “Nonetheless, her comments at the time were so positive and so definitive, it becomes disingenuous to argue, as she’s doing now, that she didn’t endorse it before it was finalized.”

So that is where we are.

I will yield the floor if someone else arrives. That is the main point I wanted to make.

I would urge our colleagues to understand what is happening. There has been an analysis and a growing understanding within the developed nations of the world that their middle-class working people are being hammered by these trade agreements. Last year, it was reported that 55 percent of the people in Germany supported the transatlantic trade agreement, and this is a follow-on to the TPP, all part of the fast-track authority Congress gave to the Trade Representative of the United States. I opposed it, but Congress voted to approve it. He is negotiating right now with the Europeans on a matching-type treaty that will also be monumental involving the Atlantic trade deal.

Last year, 55 percent of the people in Germany supported this agreement. A recent poll in Germany showed now only 17 percent support it.

In recent weeks, clear messages have also been sent by the people of the United Kingdom, our British allies; they don’t like being placed in these large international trade organizations where the UK only gets one vote. If they get that in the European Union, I don’t know if they have a single vote—and they don’t believe it has been working in their interests. That was a factor in them voting to withdraw from the EU, even though the EU is pushing this trade deal—the TTIP—exceedingly hard.

What has been the impact on our trade deals in the past? In 2011, I supported the South Korea trade deal. It was an important deal, one of our biggest trade agreements, and they are allies. I believe in the South Koreans. They are good people. So we voted for it. Congress passed it. President Obama advocated for it and signed it. At the time, he declared that our exports to South Korea would increase \$10 billion a year and that would help create manufacturing jobs in the United States; that it would be a win-win: Korea would import more to us, but we would export more to Korea too, the trade deficit would not increase, and it would be a job creator in the United States. So Congress voted for it—a big vote for it.

Well, what has happened since 2011? Last year, our exports to Korea were not \$10 billion, not \$1 billion but \$30 million. Their exports to us from South Korea were \$15 billion. So what happened? The data, the projections were

not right. That is very damaging for America. Our trade deficit with South Korea more than doubled.

I would say to my colleagues somebody needs to be asking: What is happening to jobs in America? What is happening to wages in America? The situation is not good. Since 1999, wages in America have declined \$4,186, adjusted for inflation. That is the way to calculate it properly. Median family income is down over \$4,000 since 1999. Make no mistake, bad trade deals are a part of that. Another part of that is, when you bring in more workers than you have jobs for, you create a surplus of labor and wages go down, if there are any free-market people left on Wall Street, they understand that.

So we have had a double whammy, in addition to high regulations and stupid taxes that we impose on the economy. All of these things have created a situation in which we are not healthy economically. Wages are declining. Middle-class Americans are hurting. They have a right to ask: Who in Washington is looking out for my interests? That is the way I see it.

This trade agreement—5,500-some-odd pages—is bad. We do not need to pass it, and we absolutely do not need to go into another European Union-like trade agreement where the United States gets only one vote even though we have by far the dominant economy.

What do all of these countries want first and foremost? It is understandable. It is not evil. They want to sell in our market. They want to bring home American dollars. That is their goal.

When we enter into a trade agreement with somebody who wants to sell here, we should make sure that we do it in a way that protects American workers and makes sure that our trading partners open their markets to us so that we can export as much to them as we allow them to import to us.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I thank my colleagues for the vote we will take in a very short time on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act known as CARA. This legislation holds great promise to help families and communities combat the opioid epidemic that has truly been ravaging our Nation.

The epidemic is a public health crisis, causing death and destruction to families and communities, and this legislation is barely a symbolic step. The rhetoric on the floor today and throughout our consideration of this bill, unfortunately, is unmatched by real dollars. Until we commit resources, our words will be a glass half empty, and we must fill that glass with the resources necessary to truly make a difference, as I have seen from the roundtables I have held around the State of Connecticut where law enforcement, community activists, families whose loved ones have suffered from addiction, and addicts themselves

recovering from this disease—it is a disease, and we must recognize it as a disease that can be treated if we commit the resources.

I thank Senator COATS for joining me in authoring the Expanding Access to Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs Act, which is among the measures included in this bill. This provision would allow nurse practitioners and physician assistants to access State prescription drug monitoring programs and view the patient’s prescription opioid history to determine if a patient has a history of addiction.

Although nurse practitioners and physician assistants write over 30 million opioid prescriptions every year, including in 2013, few States allow them to consult and submit prescribing data to these important State databases. Allowing them to access more information about a patient’s history enables them to help address potential addiction before it becomes a serious problem.

Critically, we must recognize the key role nurse practitioners and physician assistants can play in curbing prescription drug abuse and diversion. That is why this provision allowing those nurse practitioners and physician assistants to access State prescription drug monitoring programs is so important.

I thank my colleague Senator BALDWIN for her tireless effort in advancing the Jason Simcakoski Memorial Opioid Safety Act to address overprescribing and accountability at the VA. Her leadership on behalf of Jason’s family and their courage and strength, particularly his mother Linda, widow Heather, and daughter Anaya, were impressive and instrumental in incorporating this measure.

The provisions from Senator BALDWIN’s legislation that have been included in CARA will require the VA to expand the use of opioid safety initiatives within all VA facilities—a profoundly important step because it will enable the VA to better facilitate use of State prescription drug monitoring programs and ensure that all VA facilities provide naloxone to at-risk veterans without a copay. That is a profoundly significant step.

I hope monitoring and tracking programs will be further improved so that State boundaries can be more easily overcome in terms of information flow, and the effectiveness can include not only the VA but our civilian programs.

Additionally, improvements to the VA Patient Advocacy Program will truly help the VA better serve our veterans.

These provisions are also included in the Veterans First Act. I am hopeful that this body will move forward on the Veterans First Act.

I appreciate the bipartisan work of my colleagues in addressing the opioid crisis. I am pleased to support this bill but again emphasize that it is a short-term solution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 12 minutes.

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

TRIBUTE TO JAMES WALLNER

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, Capitol Hill is a famously transient place. Every 2 years, the membership of the House of Representatives changes, the membership of the Senate changes, and in the interim, the coming and going of congressional staffers is virtually constant. But when you take a step back and look through the wide lens of history, you can see certain pillars of permanence, certain exceptional individuals who stand out from and rise above the fleeting crowd. These are the institutional giants of Congress, the men and women whose extraordinary talents and devotion to the Constitution have shaped the character and the course of government and whose legacies continue to influence Congress long after the individuals behind them have gone.

For the past 5½ years, I have had the pleasure of working with and learning from one such individual, a true master of the Senate, James Wallner.

Friday will be James's last day as executive director of the Senate steering committee—although the optimist in me hopes that he will be back in the Senate someday. Starting next week, he will join the Heritage Foundation as the group vice president of research, where he will oversee all of the think tank's research papers, projects, and initiatives. For this, James is eminently qualified. James has been studying politics in the classroom and in real life on Capitol Hill throughout his entire adult life. In all his spare time, in between advising Senators and raising his two children, Graham and Quinn, with his wife Kimberly, James has been busy becoming a scholar, earning two master's degrees and a doctoral degree in politics, and an accomplished author, having published one book, with another forthcoming.

Aside from what must be the best time-management skills in the world, coupled with the fact that the man probably never sleeps, this is what you first notice about James: just how freakishly smart he is.

I will never forget the first time I met James, which was back in 2011, not too long after I had been sworn in to office as a Senator. As a brandnew Senator with a brandnew staff, one of my top priorities was to find someone who could help mentor and guide me and my staff—someone outside of my staff. My staff included a lot of people who had never worked in Washington before, so we needed someone on the outside of our staff to help teach us how the Senate really works and how Congress really works.

I asked around for suggestions, and one name kept coming up: James Wallner. If you need someone to give a

crash course or an extended, semester-length course or a course lasting 5½ years on Senate procedure, politics, and policy, James Wallner is the man.

This was some of the best advice I had ever received—to consult James Wallner on these and other issues. The instruction and guidance James provided to me and my staff far exceeded expectations. James's knowledge of the Senate is encyclopedic. Working with him is like having your own personal Parliamentarian by your side, always ready and eager to give comprehensive answers to virtually every question that might come up, even those dealing with the most arcane procedural mechanics within the Senate.

Most people in Washington operate on the premise that connections are what you need to succeed in politics. Some might even assume that they are all you need to succeed in politics. James, although known and esteemed by many, has flipped this conventional wisdom on its head. For him, it is not who he knows but what he knows that has made him an invaluable resource for so many Members in Congress and so many staffers on both sides of the Capital over the years.

While his formidable intellect has set him apart over the 10 years in the Senate, the qualities I always admired most in James are his deep and abiding love for this country, for its history, its people, and its institutions, and his uncompromising commitment to the self-evident truths upon which it was founded and the truths built into our governing document, the U.S. Constitution.

One of my favorite examples of this is exemplified by James's annual tradition of reading, start to finish, the official and complete notes from the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Of course, for James, it is not enough to simply read and re-read this voluminous text every year; he makes sure to do it between May 25 and September 17 so that he can read each day's notes on the very day or the very anniversary of the very day on which they were originally recorded.

James brought the same passion and appreciation for our constitutional heritage to his work as the executive director of the Senate steering committee, a position which he has held since 2012. The purpose and mission of the steering committee is to encourage innovative thinking and bold action within the Senate's Republican conference. This is no easy task, of course. In a town that is not exactly known for innovation or boldness, many may see this as a mission impossible, but James saw it as a moral imperative because he understands that many of our government's and our country's most urgent problems today are caused by an unnatural timidity and sclerosis within the legislative branch.

The job may be difficult, but James carried it out with an admirable combination of tenacity, patience, courage, and grace, and always with an unre-

lenting devotion to recovering America's founding principles and thereby putting the Congress back to work for the American people.

As James knows better than most, placing principle over party and elevating the interests of the American people over the interests of political elites is unlikely to win a popularity contest in Washington, but it will earn you the respect of your colleagues and anyone happening to be watching.

Few on Capitol Hill respect James more than two of his former bosses, Senator PAT TOOMEY and Senator JEFF SESSIONS. This is what each of them had to say about James on the occasion of his departure from the Senate.

Senator TOOMEY said:

James Wallner not only understands a wide range of policy issues, but he is a master of the congressional rules and procedures needed to turn conservative philosophies into action. He is an exceptionally smart strategist and is willing to work hard to advance the ideas needed to restore an American government that is limited in scope, efficient with taxpayers' money, and accountable to the voters.

Senator SESSIONS said:

It has been an honor to work with James in the Senate. I am proud to say that James began his Senate career in my office as a Legislative Assistant and later became my Legislative Director. In these roles, James demonstrated a mastery of congressional procedure and policy. He has supported not only me, but the entire party in developing and working to implement conservative, pro-growth policies that help place our nation on a more sustainable path. The Heritage Foundation is fortunate to have hired a man of such skill and I am confident that he will serve them well. James is without a doubt one of the most talented and dedicated staffers I have ever worked with or known in the Senate.

For 10 years, James Wallner has been an exceptionally articulate, passionate, knowledgeable, and steadfast champion of the very things that make the Senate great and that make the Senate unique—especially open, robust debate and deliberation. The Senate is better because of him.

He will be missed. But with so many challenges looming over the horizon and with so much work yet ahead of us to be completed, something tells me this will not be the last time the Senate hears from James Wallner.

Thank you, Mr. President.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, James M. Inhofe, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Johnny Isakson, Chuck Grassley, John Cornyn,

Thom Tillis, John Hoeven, Kelly Ayotte, John McCain, Rob Portman, John Barrasso, Lamar Alexander, Richard Burr, John Thune, Orrin G. Hatch.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the conference report to accompany S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin abuse, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 90, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 126 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Ernst	Mikulski
Ayotte	Feinstein	Moran
Baldwin	Fischer	Murkowski
Barrasso	Flake	Murphy
Bennet	Franken	Murray
Blumenthal	Gardner	Nelson
Blunt	Gillibrand	Paul
Booker	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Peters
Boxer	Hatch	Portman
Brown	Heinrich	Reed
Burr	Heitkamp	Reid
Cantwell	Heller	Risch
Capito	Hirono	Rubio
Cardin	Hoeven	Sanders
Carper	Isakson	Schatz
Casey	Johnson	Schumer
Cassidy	Kaine	Scott
Coats	King	Shaheen
Collins	Kirk	Stabenow
Coons	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Corker	Lankford	Tester
Cornyn	Leahy	Thune
Cotton	Manchin	Tillis
Crapo	Markey	Toomey
Cruz	McCain	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—2

Lee Sasse

NOT VOTING—8

Cochran	Rounds	Vitter
Inhofe	Sessions	Wicker
Roberts	Shelby	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 90, the nays are 2.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays be-

fore the Senate the House message to accompany H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 636) entitled "An Act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes," with House amendments to Senate amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendments to the Senate amendments to H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 1:45 p.m. will be equally divided between the leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, before I give my speech, I ask unanimous consent for Senator PORTMAN to have 1 minute.

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

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and, in less than a minute, I want to acknowledge something historic that just happened on this floor—a 90-to-2 vote for the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This is the Senate agreeing with the House to do something important to address this epidemic of heroin and prescription drug abuse, and I congratulate my colleague SHELTON WHITEHOUSE, my coauthor, and encourage all my colleagues to now get this signed as soon as possible so we can get it out to our communities to help.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

REFORMING THE BUDGET PROCESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise to discuss America's broken budget process and the Senate Budget Committee's continuing effort to provide solutions to place our Nation's budget on a better, sustainable path.

Last year, on May 5, the Senate passed its first balanced 10-year budget since 2001. This was a big deal. It was thoroughly considered and amended to the tune of 71 rollcall votes, and 146 amendments adopted overall, and it provided an enforceable plan to get the Nation's exploding debt under control.

On May 22, just 17 days later, we enacted legislation that violated the budget. Congress didn't even abide by the budget for a whole month. This trend has continued throughout the 114th Congress. Since passing its fiscal year 2016 budget plan, Congress has been unable to achieve any reduction in overspending called for in the balanced budget. Instead, Congress enacted legislation increasing spending by nearly \$150 billion and reducing revenue by \$478 billion over the 10-year window. Much of these violations were enacted as part of the end-of-the-year omnibus spending bill, which was draft-

ed behind closed doors and passed under threat of government shutdown, completely outside of regular order.

The truth is, America's budget process is broken, and it is preventing Congress from tackling the pressing fiscal challenges facing our country. The current budget process is designed only to spend and fails hard-working taxpayers. Each year, nearly \$3 trillion is spent by Washington without any meaningful congressional review or consideration. What America really needs is a budget process built to save.

The last time Congress reformed the budget process was in 1974. Times have changed, and the 40-year-old process has only grown more dysfunctional and antiquated. Until 1998, Congress had never failed to pass a budget, but in the last 15 years, Congress failed to pass a budget resolution more than half the time. Today, budgets from Congress and the President are increasingly tossed aside, leaving the country with no long-term fiscal plan.

Our appropriations process is broken. Spending bills are nearly always late, creating crippling uncertainty for agencies, businesses, and the American people. We have completed all appropriations bills on time in only 4 of the last 45 years. In 15 of those years, we did not pass one appropriations bill on time. Instead of well-considered funding decisions, the government operates on short-term spending bills or continuing resolutions. We have had to use 173 short-term spending bills since 1977, and that is just 3 years after the Budget Act was passed.

That is just the portion of the budget Congress has control over. Today, a growing portion of our budget is devoted to entitlements and other automatic spending. When Congress last reformed the budget process in 1974, this type of spending constituted only one-third of what was spent and two-thirds of the spending provided annually.

This chart points that out: 1966, 33 percent on automatic pilot, 67 percent, annual review. Now, 70 percent automatic spending, 30 percent under annual review. And this is growing automatically. These don't have guaranteed revenue sources. Whenever the revenue source doesn't meet up with what we have already said would automatically be paid, it cuts into this 30 percent that we get for annual review—automatically—and reduces the amount we get to actually make decisions on.

I have talked about what could happen if the interest rates go up—\$19 trillion in debt. So \$20 trillion at a 1-percent interest rate would cost us \$200 billion a year. The norm, 5 percent, would cost us 1,000 billion, or \$1 trillion, and we only get to make decisions—this part of it—on \$1,070 billion. So how would we fund everything the government does on \$70 billion?

This crisis is coming. In 2016, 70 percent of Federal spending is provided automatically, essentially on autopay year after year without congressional review or approval. In 15 years, this