

colleagues—because of course nothing happens around here unless it is bipartisan. That is the way this place is constructed. That is the way the Constitution is written. I am grateful that under the leadership and steady hand of Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL of Kentucky, we have gotten back to work and taken care of the country's business.

Of course, we still have disagreements like we had over spending bills that led up to this continuing resolution, and in the lameduck it will leave us with having to deal with the long-term spending bills this December, but I simply want to make the point that leadership matters. Under the leadership of Senator MCCONNELL, our committees are now actively producing legislation on a bipartisan basis that is then available to the majority leader to bring to the floor for us to debate, for Senators to offer suggestions for improvement by way of amendment and allow everybody to participate in that process to vote on the legislation and then bring it to the President's desk.

I hope we can continue to put sound policy over the sort of partisan politics that left us in the uncomfortable and unenviable position we were in yesterday, trying to meet a deadline to keep the government up and running. With a little cooperation and a little elevation of responsibility to our constituents and the people we serve, rather than partisan politics, I think we can continue to do better.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

(The remarks of Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. LANKFORD, and Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 3464 and S. 3462 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. LANKFORD. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, before the Senate adjourns this afternoon, I want to remind my colleagues that National Domestic Violence Awareness Month begins on Saturday.

Throughout the month of October, we are called to increase public awareness and understanding of domestic violence. As noted by the National Network to End Domestic Violence, domestic violence thrives when we remain silent. That is why I recently introduced a resolution to commemorate National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

As stated in our resolution, Congress should continue to raise awareness of domestic violence in the United States. We also should pledge our continued support for programs designed to assist survivors, hold perpetrators accountable, and bring an end to domestic violence.

I thank my colleagues, Senators LEAHY, AYOTTE, and KLOBUCHAR, for joining as original cosponsors of the resolution. It passed the Senate unanimously on September 15. Through the enactment of other key measures—such as the Violence Against Women Act, the Family Violence Prevention Act, and the Victims of Crime Act—Congress has made support to survivors a national priority for over three decades. Through the enactment of laws criminalizing domestic violence at the State and local level, we also have sent a strong signal to abusers that domestic violence is not a private matter, but a public issue.

We have come a long way, but our work is far from complete. Even now, domestic violence affects more than 12 million people each year in the United States, including women, men, and children of every age and socioeconomic status. Research also suggests that young women between the ages of 18 and 34 are particularly vulnerable to domestic violence. The negative effects of this crime go far beyond the confines of individual households. It impacts our communities when the victims of domestic violence are forced to choose between continued abuse or financial insecurity and even homelessness. It impacts our economy when the victims of this crime miss work and school.

Thankfully, there are many individuals and organizations in Iowa and elsewhere around the country that work around the clock to meet the needs of victims. They include the crisis hotline personnel who provide peer-to-peer support or counseling to victims across the Nation. They include the staff and volunteers at shelters, who provide safe havens for victims fleeing abuse in communities. They include the advocates who champion prevention initiatives and resources for victims at the State and Federal levels. Last, but certainly not least, they include the first responders who compassionately respond to victims of domestic violence in their most vulnerable moments. These men and women put their lives at risk when responding to domestic abuse calls, which can be among the most volatile they will experience. We thank them for their never-ending service.

Mr. President, once again, I thank my colleagues for passing this resolution unanimously. It is important that we continue to support the goals and ideals of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

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

REMEMBERING SHIMON PERES

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute and reflect on the legacy of Israeli leader, two-time Prime Minister, and ninth President of Israel Shimon Peres. I extend my condolences to the family of Shimon Peres and to the people of Israel.

Today you have lost a towering leader who leaves behind a legacy of moral clarity and hope. I had the opportunity to meet Shimon Peres on numerous occasions. After each meeting, I walked away inspired and hopeful, having benefited immensely from his insight and perspective on a number of difficult global issues.

Shimon Peres was not only one of the world's greatest statesmen but an ardent and committed advocate for peace. Given Shimon Peres's personal history and journey, it is truly remarkable that in his final years he refused to give in to cynicism and acrimony.

As an immigrant to Israel, he was part of the grand project that cultivated a thriving country and society. As a warrior, he made sure that Israel was always ready and able to defend itself. As a politician, he contributed to the lively and robust democracy that the Israelis enjoy today, but he never shied away from reaching out across lines if he thought that was in Israel's interest.

As a friend to the United States, his legacy is the unshakeable bond between our two countries, our governments, and our people. As a leader, he showed the world that extending a hand and daring to work for peace is worthy and just. He shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 with Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin. The legacy of the Oslo Accords remains active today.

We must continue to work toward a two-state solution, a Jewish and Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security. Shimon Peres's legacy is the patient, difficult, taxing, and necessary work of negotiations. It is only through direct negotiations and direct contact between the two sides, Israelis and Palestinians, that we can achieve this objective.

Shimon Peres leaves behind incredibly important initiatives, such as the Peres Center for Peace. This is a peace-

building organization that seeks to foster personal and professional interactions between Israelis and Palestinians, Arabs and Jews.

I want to pay tribute to Shimon Peres's morality and courage. He called for reconciliation in times of strife. We can fill his legacy by turning this sober and sad occasion to a call for direct talks between the Israelis and Palestinians, for boldness and courage to return to the negotiating table to fulfill the dream and meet the expectations of so many living in this part of the world who are so desperately seeking peace.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Michigan.

NASA

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today I rise to speak about NASA and the human exploration program. NASA and our industry partners have made incredible progress in space exploration, and we are now closer to human missions into deep space than we have been since we last left the Moon nearly 45 years ago. We have set a lofty but achievable goal. We are going to Mars, and we are building the rockets and infrastructure to get us there.

Achieving a complex, long-term goal can be challenging for a government, and this is especially true during an administration transition. But we can't let up on the development if we are going to put a human on Mars. That is why I, along with a number of my Commerce Committee colleagues, recently introduced the NASA Transition Authorization Act of 2016. This bipartisan bill will ensure that NASA maintains a continuity of purpose over the next year. The NASA Transition Authorization Act will give NASA the stability needed to keep NASA's important missions moving through 2017. It is not just important to the agency, it is something that is particularly important to the thousands of small- and medium-sized businesses across the country where dedicated men and women are working hard to move our space program forward.

With this bill, we are sending a strong message to companies like Futuramic Tool & Engineering in Michigan. They are so proud to help build the rockets that will take us to Mars, and all of us in the Congress must stand solidly behind their efforts.

A few weeks ago, I visited the Kennedy Space Center to witness the launch of the OSIRIS-REx spacecraft, a science mission that will take a sample from an asteroid and return that sample back to Earth. I saw the launch infrastructure taking shape for the massive SLS rocket and the assembly and testing of the Orion crew capsule that will launch in 2018 aboard SLS. I also saw amazing work by Boeing, SpaceX, and the United Launch Alliance on their rockets and spacecraft, which will start sending U.S. astronauts to

the International Space Station in a couple of years. When you see the scale of these gigantic structures and the intricacy of the machinery, you really get a sense of how much power, energy, and precision it takes to conduct these very ambitious missions, and you see why we can't stop this momentum toward space. We are going boldly, and we are going to stay, and this legislation makes that point very clear.

Importantly, this bill authorizes the entire agency, reaffirming that NASA is a multimission agency with important missions in space technology, aeronautics, exploration, and education.

I am particularly pleased that the legislation underscores the importance of NASA's science programs. Investing in NASA's science mission leads to research and development of new technologies. These technologies increase the competitiveness of our space program and at the same time shed light on ways we can protect and improve our planet Earth. I cannot overstate the importance of this work to our Nation, our planet, and to humanity as a whole. I agree with many in the scientific community who believe we need to increase our investments in NASA science missions, aeronautics, and other areas of the agency, and I will work to improve these programs more comprehensively in future legislation.

I am also pleased that parts of my bill reinforces NASA's ongoing efforts to educate the scientists and astronauts of the future. Earlier this year, Senator GARDNER and I introduced legislation to promote American competitiveness through investments in research and STEM education. NASA's inspiring exploration and science missions make the agency uniquely positioned to engage students in STEM subjects. I witnessed this firsthand when former astronaut Charlie Precourt joined me in speaking to a group of Michigan students last year. I can assure you the students were much more excited to talk to a former astronaut than a U.S. Senator.

It is also my hope that we can move forward and pass the space weather bill that Senator GARDNER and I introduced earlier this year. This legislation assigns roles to the various Federal agencies involved with space weather and improves the research and observations needed to better predict space weather events. The space weather bill, together with the NASA bill, represents a strong and positive bipartisan consensus for our space program, including space science. Heliophysics, or the study of the Sun, is a critical component of NASA's science research mission and has major implications for life here on Earth.

I was also pleased to see that NASA's new Associate Administrator for Science, University of Michigan professor Dr. Thomas Zurbuchen, has a strong background in space weather. I wish him good luck in his new role.

I wish to congratulate Senator CRUZ, Chairman THUNE, Ranking Member

NELSON, Senator WICKER, Senator RUBIO, Senator UDALL, and Senator CANTWELL for their hard work on the NASA transition act, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that NASA has a steady path forward to keep making groundbreaking discoveries and inspiring Americans for years to come.

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. 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

AMENDING THE GULLAH/GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 573, H.R. 3004.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3004) to amend the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act to extend the authorization for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 3004) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

BATHROOMS ACCESSIBLE IN EVERY SITUATION ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 5147, which was received from the House.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5147) to amend title 40, United States Code, to require restrooms in public buildings to be equipped with baby changing facilities.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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