

prevention, treatment, and recovery programs. CARA does just that. This legislation would support innovative, evidence-based solutions—best practices that are already showing great progress in States like mine.

We need to do all we can to prevent and treat the abuse of prescription opioids. I have pushed for years to have the FDA promote safer alternatives to powerful prescription pain killers and to remove from the market the older, less safe drugs. The FDA's announcement to expand access to abuse-deterrent formulations of these powerful drugs is a step in the right direction in response to my concerns, but the FDA can and must do more.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the *RECORD* the April 28, 2014, Leahy-Blumenthal letter to the FDA Commissioner.

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

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, April 28, 2014.

Hon. MARGARET A. HAMBURG,
Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration,
Silver Spring, MD.

DEAR COMMISSIONER HAMBURG: We are writing to urge the expedited review of New Drug Applications for abuse-deterrent formulations of single-entity hydrocodone products. Zohydro ER was the first pure hydrocodone product to receive FDA market approval. The drug was approved despite lacking any abuse-deterrent properties and over strong objections from the FDA's own independent advisory committee. We share the concerns of the many governors and state attorneys general who believe this powerful drug is all but certain to exacerbate our nation's addiction to opioid analgesics, which results in tens of thousands of overdose deaths each year.

Given their potency and ease of abuse, we have little doubt that pure opioid products may lead more Americans to addiction, some even to heroin. The FDA has already recognized the heightened risks of overdose and death with Zohydro ER, even at recommended doses. Drug developers continue to seek regulatory approval for other easy to abuse opioids, such as Moxduo IR. To the extent that pure opioid products fill a necessary niche in responsible pain management practices, the FDA must now take all available measures to ensure that patients are soon provided safer alternatives. This process begins by prioritizing review of abuse-deterrent formulations. Such formulations are much more difficult to crush or dissolve, two preferred methods of abuse.

As safer, abuse-deterrent opioids are approved, the FDA should act swiftly to remove any older, less safe versions. In the past, it has taken up to three years for the FDA to ban products that lack abuse-deterrent properties when a safer equivalent exists. Americans should not have to wait this long with Zohydro ER.

We also request that the FDA brief our staff on your plans to monitor the use of Zohydro ER, including what metrics will be used to potentially reevaluate its status as an approved drug if widespread problems develop. We also ask that you share your planned efforts to curb prescription drug abuse generally, including the development and approval of effective non-opioid painkillers that may finally break the cycle of opioid addiction. Each year, the opioid epidemic seeps into more communities and

takes more lives. We are eager to learn how we can assist the FDA to finally get ahead of this scourge.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL,
U.S. Senator.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
U.S. Senator.

Mr. LEAHY. I am also concerned that rural communities are in desperate need of the lifesaving drug naloxone so that opioid overdoses can be stopped. I have heard from law enforcement officers and grateful families what a miracle this drug can be, so we need to make sure we have it supplied where it can literally save lives. I have had police officers tell me that they arrived at a scene with an overdose, and because they had that with them, they saved the life of the person. If they had not had it, the person would have been dead by the time the ambulance arrived.

In Vermont, we have seen a 65 percent increase in the number of Vermonters getting treatment for their addiction over the past 2 years. This is encouraging progress and reflects the fact that our Governor and also State legislators of both parties have stepped up. But we know that there are hundreds more who are on waiting lists, and patients in the very rural corners of my State travel hours just to get their medication. We need to do more about this real threat to our communities.

I am very proud to cosponsor Senator SHAHEEN's emergency supplemental appropriations bill. I want to be able to fund additional public health outreach, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement efforts. We have passed much larger emergency supplemental bills to address swine flu and Ebola. We passed huge supplemental bills on Ebola when we did not have a single case of Ebola originate here in the United States. We were worried about it coming in, but it did not originate here. But here, we have tens of thousands in the Presiding Officer's State, in my State, and in every other State. We have to take the health epidemic already in our communities just as seriously as we did those diseases that did not originate on our shores.

(The remarks of Mr. LEAHY and Mr. FRANKEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2506 are printed in today's *RECORD* under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, this is the first week of February, and a new month brings a new "Waste of the Week" speech from the Senator from Indiana. In preparing for this, we learned another disturbing fact about our economy, and that is that the United States has hit yet another new

mark. Our national debt now exceeds \$19 trillion.

It wasn't that long ago that I was standing on this floor and talking about the fact that we are approaching \$11 trillion of debt, and in just a few years that has accelerated in a most dramatic way. Now it has reached \$19 trillion. Obviously, it is having and it is going to have a significant impact on the future of this country and our economic growth. In fact, the Bureau of Economic Analysis said that our Nation's gross domestic product—the measure of our Nation's economic activity—grew a very anemic 0.7 percent in the last quarter of 2015. We simply cannot sustain our economy and grow and provide economic opportunity for Americans and jobs for Americans at a growth rate of 0.7 percent. In fact, the growth rate on the average is now about 2 percent. We can't even keep our heads above water in terms of providing employment opportunities for people if we don't grow at a much faster pace, particularly following one of deepest and most damaging recessions we have ever had.

Clearly there are issues that need to be addressed, issues that need to be talked about, and actions that need to be taken that put us on a better path to growth. Not having come up with the ability to address our long-term debt in any kind of a macro sense after many opportunities over the years and many efforts—some of them bipartisan and all of them denied by the President of the United States in terms of going forward for "political reasons"—I have shifted my talk to, say, at least let's try to stop spending money that falls in the category of waste, fraud, and abuse.

I have documented over the last year or so well over \$130 billion of documented waste, fraud, and abuse. This isn't just conjuring up some story or picking up stories out of a newspaper; these are documented examples by independent agencies of the Federal Government that examine our spending and come up with ways in which they can point out that the spending is not necessary and that these funds can be used for much better purposes, the best purpose of which would be to not increase our national debt in paying for waste and not demanding ever-more tax increases from our constituents to help pay for waste.

This week I am going to highlight something that wastes taxpayers' money and literally wastes space, warehouse space. The Department of Homeland Security owns or leases a number of warehouses around the country. They need this because they need to have in place the equipment that is necessary to address a disaster. Whether it is a natural or manmade disaster or whether it is a terrorist attack—for whatever reason, they need a number of these warehouses. They either buy or lease these warehouses to store this equipment that is needed for emergency situations.

In 2013 the Department of Homeland Security spent \$60 million to own or lease a total of 1,628 warehouses that, when added together, occupy 6.3 million square feet. That is a lot of leased space. That is a lot of space to own or lease to store equipment. That is the size of 110 football fields.

No one is questioning the need to be prepared for disasters or the need for warehouse space in different locations around the country, but, as is the case with so many government agencies, in the use of taxpayer dollars, we need to oversee and make sure the money is being spent in an efficient and effective way.

Thank goodness for these inspectors general. Without them, we would not be able to determine and find out what is going on at these various agencies regarding the handling of taxpayer money.

The latest report from the DHS inspector general said that there are some warehouses that are ripe for elimination, which would save taxpayers about \$9.7 million over a 10-year period of time. The inspector general said that the first of these buildings holds primarily a bunch of broken chairs—unused furniture. It is storage space for paperwork that is no longer necessary—and indicated that the DHS leases this warehouse in Northern Virginia for \$934,000 a year. I wish I owned that warehouse. I would be prohibited under the ethics code from doing that, but that is a pretty good deal. You build a warehouse and you lease it to DHS and charge them \$934,000 a year, and it is filled with equipment that is either broken or needs to be thrown out. In a macro sense, it kind of reminds me of my garage. I started thinking, well, there is a bunch of broken stuff in there sitting around on a shelf. Why don't I just get rid of it? Then I would have the space to store something that is needed.

I guess what the Inspector General is saying is, look, this stuff looks like a bunch of broken chairs and stuff we don't need, so why don't we get rid of it and save the taxpayers some money? Over the next decade, this could save the taxpayers a lot of money.

Let me show another picture. DHS also leases a 6,500-square-foot warehouse in Northern California. That is only \$74,000 of taxpayers' money on an annual basis. The warehouse is virtually empty. Maybe they have a plan to put something in there, but it is sitting there empty, and it is costing the taxpayers \$74,000.

The IG said: There are some old computers there which we don't use anymore. We bought new ones. There is a lot of broken equipment in there. There is old office furniture, and there are some books.

Again, it sounds a little bit like my garage on a macro basis. Why do we pay over \$70,000 to lease this warehouse when that is what it contains? I mean, let's throw it out.

These are just a few of the items the IG found. Clearly, though, it is an ex-

ample of an inefficient use of taxpayer dollars, and it can add up to some significant numbers. Those numbers, as I have been posting here over the last year or so, are now totaling \$130,146,746,016. It is a waste of a lot of money, and it is a waste that needn't take place.

I am going to keep coming down here week after week highlighting to my colleagues that we can do a better job of oversight, we can do a better job of running this government, and we can do a better job for the taxpayers, who are working hard to earn money that is taxed by Uncle Sam. Some of it is wasted or spent through fraud or abuse.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about our relations with Iran and the enforcement of the U.S.-Iran—the international nuclear deal.

Let me first start with a few observations to reinforce an important point: that Iran is neither our friend nor our ally. Just last Wednesday, as the international community marked the 71st anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz as part of UNESCO's Holocaust Remembrance Day, when countries from around the world came together in solemn remembrance of the Shoah, united in a shared commitment that the atrocities of the Holocaust must never happen again, Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, issued a very different proclamation. It came in the form of a video uploaded to his official Web site in which the narrator condemns the nations of the world for supporting Israel and questions the legitimacy and magnitude of the Holocaust.

Just a few days later, the Supreme Leader of Iran awarded medals to the members of the Revolutionary Guard Corps who detained American sailors last month under very dubious circumstances. The Iranian Supreme Leader, eager to use this incident for his own propaganda purposes, called them Medals of Conquest.

These two actions are despicable and not the sign of a nation ready to rejoin the international community. These actions by Iran's Supreme Leader are just the most recent in a series of provocations and reminders that the Iranian regime is neither America's ally nor friend.

A nation such as Iran that continues to suppress dissent, promotes terrorism on its regional neighbors, and blatantly disregards international law and

norms, is a destabilizing force, a revolutionary regime not to be trusted. It is precisely for this reason—because we are deeply distrustful of Iran and its intentions—that we have to come together to rigorously, aggressively enforce the terms of the nuclear deal with Iran and push back on its bad behavior, from its support for terrorism, to its human rights abuses, to its illegal ballistic missile tests.

Today I wanted to focus on one of the most vital elements of the nuclear deal—the so-called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or the nuclear deal with Iran, which is the dramatic increase in access and surveillance that the International Atomic Energy Agency, or the IAEA, has gained through this agreement.

After implementation day was reached, one of the significant consequences of that milestone is not just that Iran has taken dramatic action to push back its own nuclear trajectory but that it has granted unprecedented access to the world's nuclear watchdog agency to monitor its compliance with the deal. As Congress, the administration, and the international community now focus on enforcing the terms of the JCPOA, it is worth taking a much deeper look at what exactly makes this IAEA access so unprecedented and so important to maintain.

I recently visited the headquarters of the IAEA in Vienna, Austria, with a delegation of eight Senators. This agency has a huge amount riding on its ability to successfully detect any Iranian cheating under this deal. It is no understatement to say that the very credibility of the IAEA is on the line as it monitors, inspects, and verifies the status of Iran's nuclear program—not just for a week, a month, or a year, but for decades into the future. I was pleased and reassured to see that they are using some of the very innovative inspection techniques developed at America's own National Laboratories. These are just a few of the topics I want to touch on in the minutes ahead.

The nuclear deal reached with Iran required that they provide the IAEA with around-the-clock, 24/7 access to monitor Iran's entire nuclear fuel cycle. What is a nuclear fuel cycle? It is all the different steps required to go from mining the raw ore to actually producing highly enriched uranium—from uranium mines, uranium mills, centrifuge production workshops, to every known and declared uranium enrichment site connected to Iran's nuclear program.

Simply put, before this agreement—before the JCPOA—Iran could have converted its uranium or its plutonium into material useful for a nuclear weapon. On implementation day, Iran disabled its Arak reactor. They filled the core of that reactor with concrete, shutting off the so-called plutonium pathway to a nuclear weapon.

Today I will focus on the uranium pathway of the commercial nuclear fuel cycle, which includes the four