

Navy Reserve, and for the years he put in as a staff member to Congressman John Porter, for the work he did in the House of Representatives representing the 10th Congressional District, and for his term in the United States Senate. It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve with him. Despite our political differences, I count him as a friend, as an ally, and as a true champion for the State of Illinois.

I wish my colleague MARK KIRK the very best in his future endeavors.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

IRAN SANCTIONS EXTENSION BILL

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to voice my support of the extension of the Iran Sanctions Act, which I believe we must treat as just one step in our continued efforts to counter Iran's destabilizing and nefarious actions throughout the world. This bill merely extends the basis of our extensive sanctions network against Iran aimed at crippling the Ayatollah's deadly pursuit of a nuclear weapon for 10 years.

The Iran Sanctions Act, which is part of the extensive network of sanctions that I helped author for the United States and our allies to levy against the Iranian regime, serves as the basis of the economic leverage that brought Iran to the negotiating table in the first place. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have authored and championed the foundation of our network of sanctions that crippled Iran's economy and kept its nuclear pursuits at bay. It has been my consistent position that the United States must address these nefarious activities apart from the nuclear portfolio. We need to send a signal to Iran that the United States, while meeting its obligations under the JCPOA, will continue to respond to other threatening and dangerous activities the Iranian regime has taken.

Throughout debate over the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, its proponents made a number of repeated claims. Among these were that it was crippling sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table and that in the event of a breach of the agreement, the United States and our implementing partners would have every authority to "snap back"—the term that was coined—the sanctions that have been lifted. If the sanctions architecture has expired, then we have no sanctions which we can snap back. These sanctions were in place when the JCPOA was authored and signed, and it follows that they should remain in place.

Many of the agreement's proponents argued that putting the JCPOA in

place would give the United States and our allies the opportunity to focus on countering Iran's more conventional threats to American security and regional stability. Since the nuclear agreement came into force, Iran has continued its efforts to destabilize the region and increase its power through proxy and terrorist networks.

Since we signed the nuclear agreement with Iran, Iran has been testing the agreement, testing our resolve, and quite literally testing long-range ballistic missiles. We have seen multiple ballistic missile tests in the past year and a half—in October and November of last year and in March and May of this year and one launch not far from U.S. naval vessels. We have seen American sailors humiliated and detained at gunpoint. Just this weekend, a vessel controlled by the IRGC—the Iranian Revolutionary Guard—pointed a weapon at a U.S. military helicopter in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran continues to support a Houthi insurgency that toppled the legitimate Government of Yemen. It supports Shia militias in Iraq who seek to control the democratically elected Iraqi Government and bring it closer in line with Iran, threatening to return Iraq to civil war or worse. It supports Assad in Syria and continues to send millions of dollars and sophisticated weapons to Hezbollah and Hamas, threatening innocent civilians in Syria and Israel's security. It continues human rights violations and sustains an aging clergy who is losing touch with the hopes and dreams of young Iranians and moderates, an out-of-touch clergy who dominates the power structures and the security apparatus that restricts civil liberties and promotes its hegemonic regional destabilization. It has the largest inventory of ballistic missiles in the Middle East, capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, chemical weapons, biological weapons, and continues to develop cyber war capabilities.

Iran continues its development of space-launch vehicles that can lead to a longer range missile capability. It has cooperated with North Korea on the transfer of ballistic missile technology. This is in addition to the fact that Iran has, by its own admission, violated the JCPOA itself. The International Atomic Agency reported that Iran has twice violated the terms of the agreement by producing more heavy water than the deal allows for. An excess stockpile of heavy water—a critical component of operating nuclear reactors—reduces Iran's nuclear breakout time. Yet, even with this violation, the United States and our implementing partners have upheld our end of the bargain.

As I have repeatedly said and which I outlined in the bill I authored earlier this year, we must take decisive action in response to Iran's behavior which is in violation, among other things, of the United Nations Security Council resolutions and threatens America's inter-

ests and regional stability. The United States must reserve the right to hold Iran accountable for all of its actions, and that is exactly what my legislation would do by imposing stricter sanctions tied to specific nefarious actions outside the nuclear portfolio.

After months of consultations with my colleagues in the Senate, outside experts, and constituents, I introduced a bipartisan bill, S. 3267, the Countering Iranian Threats Act, on July 14, just before Congress broke for recess. Its acronym, CITA, not only extends the Iran Sanctions Act, which we will do independently today, it also expands sanctions for ballistic missile development, support for terrorism, and other illicit Iranian actions, and it sanctions transfers of conventional weapons to or from Iran—the totality of Iran's dangerous behavior outside of the nuclear portfolio. Specifically, it requires the administration to identify the specific Iranians, persons, or entities that are engaged in these activities and then apply sanctions that freeze their assets and block their international travel and business interests. In this way, the sanctions are surgical and designed to avoid interference with the terms of the Iran nuclear deal.

We must provide leverage to seek necessary change in the conduct of the Iranian regime and hold Iran accountable for meeting its international obligations, including the terms of the JCPOA. We will improve the deplorable human rights situation in Iran and double down on our reassurances to Israel and American allies in the region of our full commitment to regional security.

The fact is, there is much we can do to ensure a bright future undimmed by a nuclear cloud. We must authorize the Iran Sanctions Act that I have authored so that, as flawed as the JCPOA was, in my view, the Iranians will know the consequences of any breach and we will deal with missile proliferation, terrorism, and regional destabilization that is just as dangerous and just as threatening to American security and to our ally, the State of Israel, and our other allies in the region. I hope we will get to that new phase in the next Congress.

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

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

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today on another topic that is affecting every single State represented here in this Chamber, and that is the opioid epidemic. This is heroin, prescription

drugs, and increasingly the synthetic heroin coming into our State and poisoning the people we represent, leading to a situation where we have about 120 people dying every day of overdoses—about 5 a day in my State of Ohio. Unfortunately, I have to report today that it is getting worse, not better.

I also believe that Congress is beginning to take the right steps to address that, and that is what I want to talk about today. This is the 28th time I have come to the floor to talk about this issue this year because it is one that affects every State, but particularly mine.

I come from Ohio. It is a State that recently, based on a new report, was named as one of the top States in the country for overdoses and, unfortunately, the tragedy of overdose deaths.

For those who die from overdoses, it is a tragedy, of course. But, frankly, it is the tip of the iceberg because there are so many people whose lives are shattered, whose lives are torn apart, who are not going to work and whose communities are facing more and more crime because of this issue.

It was addressed here in this Chamber recently by the legislation I want to talk about today, but it is something we must find a way to deal with immediately because of the urgency of the problem. To this Senator, it is much like other public health crises that we face as a country, whether it is a Zika virus or other issues that come up where Congress has said that we need to have immediate funding and immediate changes in policies to address it. What Congress has done already and the President has signed into law as of a couple of months ago is broad legislation called CARA, or the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, and that legislation is historic in the sense that it is the first time in over 20 years that Congress has taken a look at this issue and come up with a comprehensive approach. It focuses on education and prevention to help people make the right decision and not get into the funnel of addiction, particularly focusing on young people. But it also focuses on better treatment services and recovery.

Right now there are people who cannot access treatment, and part of the problem is that there is not adequate funding for that treatment. Part of the problem is that there is a stigma attached to addiction and people aren't willing to come forward. Our legislation, broadly speaking, addresses that as well because it says that addiction is a disease and ought to be treated as such, which should help to get people into treatment.

For the first time Congress is supporting not just treatment and detox but actually getting people into longer term recovery programs. Think of housing arrangements or other supportive recovery services that we found from our experience in doing the research around the country, which are much more successful in terms of help-

ing people to turn their lives around and to lead a productive life. What we have found in the last 3 years with five conferences here in Washington, DC, bringing experts in from all around the country, is that this is something that can actually help to turn the tide. It is the first time Congress has focused on that. We also focused on the issue of ensuring that the law enforcement community and first responders—our firefighters and others—have access to this miracle drug called Narcan or naloxone, which is able to reverse the effects of an overdose. There is a program to allow them to apply to get the Narcan they need to help save lives, and it is amazing. It was administered 16,000 times in Ohio last year. This year it will be a lot more than that. Those are lives that are saved. It is not the ultimate solution. The solution is getting people into treatment and the recovery they need, but it is necessary right now given the epidemic that we face.

There are other aspects of the legislation, as well, that help ensure that we get the prescription drugs off the shelves, which unfortunately are being abused by having more drug take-back programs. We provide more resources to ensure that people can get the help they need in terms of treatment and recovery.

I am happy to say that the legislation is beginning to be implemented. I would ask the administration again today to expedite that implementation. Of the seven larger programs that are part of this legislation, I think it is fair to say that two are being implemented at this point already, and we need to move forward with others as well. I know it takes a while. We need to be sure that the programs are properly implemented. But again, there needs to be an urgency about this issue.

Section 303 of the legislation is being implemented now by the Department of Health and Human Services, as one example. It expands access to medication-assisted treatment by allowing nurse practitioners and physician assistants to prescribe medication-assisted treatment to help treat an opioid use disorder. This is important. Back in my home State, I am hearing a lot from people who are already training people to be able to provide this assistance to those who are addicted and need to have this medication-assisted treatment using methadone, Suboxone or Vivitrol. To allow nurse practitioners and physician assistants to participate in this is incredibly important. This is progress, but we are pushing the administration to implement the law even more quickly.

CARA also deals with the growing demand for drugs, as I said, by improving access to longer term recovery. Recently, I was able to go to a recovery house in Canton, OH, called the Phoenix Recovery Home. I was able to talk to some of the recovering addicts there, in one case several times where

it had not been successful, but this longer term recovery was working for them. Again, this legislation is so important to implement the recovery aspect of it.

The funding for this has also been a work in progress. We have made some progress toward increasing the funding. This year there is a 47-percent increase in funding for the opioid crisis. In the CARA legislation there is an authorization for additional funding in the amount of \$181 million every single year. That is important. That \$181 million every year going forward is something that will be important in this comprehensive approach.

In the short term, we are working under a short-term spending bill right now called the continuing resolution. We were able to get funding of \$37 million that expires next week. We have to be sure that funding continues. That is adequate funding to implement the program now, but we need to ensure that we have short-term funding over the next period of time, whenever that is—some say it will be from now until March—to ensure we keep CARA implemented.

What I am pleased to report today is that the 21st Century Cures legislation, which the House has sent over to the Senate, includes a dramatic increase in funding for this issue. It is about \$500 million per year over the next 2 years of additional funding that will be block-granted to the States for prevention and treatment. This is incredibly important to my State of Ohio and other States. My understanding is that States that have a higher prevalence of overdoses will be given priority in terms of these funding dollars. I think that is appropriate. It will be helpful to those States hardest hit.

I wish that some of the parameters of the funding instructions had been a little broader to include this issue we talked about earlier having to deal with the recovery aspect. But we are working to ensure that, as this legislation is implemented, the States have maximum flexibility to address this problem.

This legislation will be bipartisan. I think you will see the vote to be very bipartisan next week when we take it up, and in part it is because of this legislation. So between CARA and this new legislation in the Cures Act, we are going to see additional funding and it is urgent that we see it.

The Kaiser Family Foundation recently released a report based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that found that one in nine heroin deaths in the United States happened in our home State of Ohio. We have the most deaths from synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl and Carfentanil, that is coming into our communities. We are seeing unfortunately an increase not just in Ohio, but in other States around the country.

Every day I hear about this issue from Ohioans. Sometimes when I am back home at events that have nothing

to do with this substance abuse issue, people will come up to me, as they will this weekend, and talk about their personal stories.

Recently, I received a couple of letters. Just before Thanksgiving I got a letter from Elaine. She is from Cincinnati, my hometown. She wrote that her daughter was lost to a drug overdose in 2013 and her grandson from a drug overdose on August 1 of this year. She writes that her other son is now an active heroin addict. She went through a story about trying to get him into a detox center for treatment but she faced barriers. One of the barriers in her case was being able to afford it. The insurance initially wouldn't cover it. We tried to help her with that, but in the meantime, she is at her wit's end to do something now to save her son's life, having lost two other members of her family. Again, this legislation we are going to vote on early next week, the Cures Act will help with regard to Elaine's inability to find detox and treatment for her son.

Barbara in Columbus has been in touch with my office a lot. She lost her son Eric to an overdose in 2012. He was just a week shy of his 24th birthday. She writes that Eric wanted to go to rehab. His sister took him to every place in Columbus, and no one had room. There was no room at the inn. This is another issue we are finding across the country. Sometimes these resources are available in larger urban areas, but they are frankly oversubscribed given the issue of heroin and prescription drug addiction and the growing problem that we have. She writes:

We need to stop jailing people for drug use. We need to stop people from dying in the streets, and get them into treatment clinics. We need to recognize the difference between drug use and drug abuse. We need focus on creating a society where people do not feel the need to numb the pain of their existence through drug abuse.

I agree with her, and that is the focus of the legislation, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask for an additional 30 seconds.

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, again, I am pleased that Congress has made so much progress in this area. I see my colleague from the Judiciary Committee is here, Senator LEAHY, who helped get this legislation through his committee, along with Senator GRASSLEY. It is called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

Now we have a chance with the Cures Act to put even more funding immediately against this problem. I encourage my colleagues to support that legislation. It is good legislation for other reasons, as well, but also because of the fact that this epidemic of opioid abuse must be addressed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the work of my colleague, and I am glad to work with him on this.

JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on another subject, each morning in this Chamber, we pledge allegiance to our flag. We end by declaring that we are "one Nation under God with liberty and justice for all." I believe in those words, but it is not enough just to say the words. It is our obligation to bring meaning to this promise.

Today I hope that Congress will finally take an important step forward by passing the bipartisan Justice for All Reauthorization Act. I have long championed the Justice for All Act to make our justice system more fair. Our bill will strengthen indigent defense and expand the rights of crime victims. It will improve the use of forensic evidence, including rape kits, to provide justice swiftly. It will help protect the innocent by increasing access to postconviction DNA testing. The Senate passed this bipartisan legislation in June, and the House approved a slightly modified version earlier this week. I am disappointed the House decreased authorizations for many programs I support. Still, the bill makes important changes and will improve the lives of many of our most vulnerable citizens. I urge my fellow Senators to consent to its immediate passage.

As a former prosecutor, I am dedicated to ensuring that our criminal justice system has integrity and the confidence of the public it serves. I started out on the front lines as State's attorney in Chittenden County, VT. And for the past 20 years, I have served as chairman or ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. During that time, it has become clear to me that our system is deeply flawed—there is not always justice for all.

I have met many people who were wrongly convicted of crimes they did not commit. Kirk Bloodsworth—let me tell you a story about Kirk Bloodsworth, who is one such young man. He was just out of the Marines in 1984 when he was falsely convicted and sentenced to death for the rape and murder of a 9-year-old girl.

He always declared his innocence, but he was nearly executed, until DNA evidence proved he was innocent in 1993 and helped law enforcement find the person who actually committed the crime. He became the first death row inmate in the United States exonerated by DNA evidence.

I have always been impressed with his courage, but he was not the last. There were 149 innocent people exonerated just last year—in 1 year, 149—the highest number on record. Our justice system failed not only these innocent people, but also the victims of crime. Those of us who have been prosecutors

know what it means if you convict the wrong person, aside from the injustice to the person who was convicted. It means that somebody who committed the crime is still out there free and has not been arrested and has not been convicted. Our justice system failed not only these innocent people but also the victims of crime. We can and we must do more to fix this injustice.

I believe we should eliminate the death penalty entirely because I know the system gets it wrong. But until we do away with the death penalty, we must improve the integrity of our criminal justice system. That is why I joined with Kirk years ago to enact the Post-Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program. This was originally part of the Innocence Protection Act enacted in 2000, and it gives defendants like Kirk a chance to prove their innocence. That should not be too much to ask.

We can and we must do more to fix this injustice. We must do more to ensure that our justice system gets it right from the beginning. That means improving the quality of indigent defense. Our system too often fails to provide a lawyer for every person accused of a crime, even if they cannot afford one. Our Founding Fathers recognized that no system could be fair if accusations by a king or a government went unchallenged. Without a vigorous defense, it is impossible to determine who is actually guilty and who has been wrongly accused. This legislation requires the Department of Justice to provide technical assistance to States to improve their indigent defense systems, and it ensures that public defenders will have a seat at the table when States determine how to use their Byrne JAG criminal justice funding.

Improving systems of indigent defense will mean fewer innocent people behind bars. It is an outrage when an innocent person is wrongly punished. Of course, this injustice is compounded when the true perpetrator remains on the streets, able to commit more crimes. We lock up the wrong person, and the person who committed the crime is still out there to commit more crimes.

My brave friend Debbie Smith, a champion for victims of sexual assault, waited 6 years after being attacked before her rape kit was tested and the perpetrator, the criminal, was caught. Survivors like Debbie should not have to live in anguish, knowing their attacker remains free. Our bill provides resources for forensic testing. Specifically, it creates a new tracking system so testing can be done more efficiently. It will also expand access to forensic exams in rural areas and for underserved populations. Coming from a State like Vermont, I know how important that will be in rural areas.

Sexual assaults must be prevented wherever they occur, including in our Nation's prisons. That is why I strongly supported the Prison Rape Elimination Act when it was enacted in 2003. This bill imposes true accountability