

The cyber sanctions and strategy that we require are unique to the Senate bill. They will be the first mandatory sanctions in history passed against cyber criminals. This bill also codifies Executive orders 13687 and 13694 regarding cyber security, as they apply to North Korea, which were enacted last year in the wake of the Sony Pictures hack and other cyber incidents. It is also a unique feature of our Senate bill today.

The mandatory sanctions on metals and minerals are unique to the legislation. Expert estimates, as we just said, put North Korea's rare metal minerals and steel exports at around \$2 billion, so these sanctions could have a significant impact in deterring the regime and its enablers. The sanctions in this bill are secondary, as we have discussed, which means they would be applied to individuals and entities, not just in the United States but around the world, who would assist the Government of North Korea and the designated entities that engage in the activities prohibited by this legislation. It mandates a strategy and sanctions against North Korea's human rights abuses.

You can see what it does on the chart. You can see the opportunity we have before us and the American people and our obligation to make sure we are doing everything we can to stand up for the people of North Korea and stand up to the totalitarian regime of North Korea.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation tonight, this bipartisan product of countless hours of debate and discussions and negotiations, and to come away with a good product that we can be proud of, to work with the House Members so that this is on the President's desk. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield my time.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the committee-reported amendment is agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 20 Leg.]

YEAS—96

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

NOT VOTING—4

Durbin
Graham

Sanders
Sullivan

The bill (H.R. 757), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

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

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

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business and also to be allotted time beyond 10 minutes.

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

CHILD CARE ACT AND LEAD POISONING

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this evening to talk about childcare, in particular one piece of legislation which I have introduced today, S. 2539, but also to talk more broadly about the critical need in our country for more options, more opportunities for families—especially low-income families—to be able to afford high-quality childcare. The bill that was introduced today is the Child Care Access to Resources for Early Learning Act. Of course, the acronym or shorthand for the bill is the Child CARE Act, standing for the words in the bill that focus on resources and in particular resources for early learning.

It is this Senator's belief, and I think the evidence is abundantly clear over time whenever this issue is studied, that in terms of the positive impact of early care and learning of a child, the evidence tells us over and over again that if kids learn more now, they will literally earn more later. That connection between learning and earning is compelling, and I think it is an essential part of the debate. Early education and care for a young child has an impact on all of our lives when it comes to the economy.

We know now from the evidence that high-quality early learning contributes to a reduction in need for special education. It also helps to lower juvenile justice rates. It also helps to improve health outcomes over time. It also increases high school graduation and college matriculation rates.

For some children from low-income households, a lot of these studies have also shown that by the age of 3, they will have heard 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers. Even before they enter kindergarten, this so-called word gap means they are already far behind. The income level of the household can often determine how many words that child has heard in his or her lifetime. Of course, the reason it is such a big number is because the words get repeated, but even when you factor in the repeating of words over and over again, just imagine how far behind they are if they are behind by 30 million words. If it were 5 million words, that would be a substantial gap, but, of course, it is much worse than that.

I believe and I think the evidence shows that in the decades to come, the strength of our economy and the fiscal stability of our Nation will depend on the viability and vitality of our future workforce. I think that is evident from the research. But, again, that connection between early learning and the earning potential of that individual is abundant.

Unfortunately, for many families, the need is still substantially great. Just last fall, Pennsylvania alone had a waiting list of 7,000 families who qualified for childcare vouchers but did not receive them. In other words, in one State there were 7,000 families who were eligible for these vouchers and did not receive them. That story, unfortunately, is playing out across the country. According to data from the Department of Health and Human Services, less than 1 in 10 children nationwide under the age of 4 received childcare assistance. In Pennsylvania it is about 15 percent. Just think about that—nationwide, 1 in 10 is eligible for this kind of help and is not receiving it.

Child Care Aware—one of the many groups who helped with the legislation I just mentioned, the Child CARE Act—tells us that particularly in urban and rural communities, there is a severe shortage of high-quality or licensed childcare facilities.

In Pennsylvania, where we have a significant State investment in childcare, only 3.5 percent of childcare slots for children birth to age 4 years old are in the highest quality programs.

For many families who can even find care, the cost is very burdensome. For most families, childcare is often the second most costly expense, behind only housing. Just imagine that—the second highest expense in the life of a family for far too many families is childcare, second only to housing. In 2014, in more than half of the United States, a year of childcare costs more than a year of college tuition at a public college. That is another stunning comparison.

We hear it all the time from real people—not just numbers or studies, we hear it from real people. Last week when we were discussing the bill, the Child CARE Act, we heard from a Washington, DC, Metropolitan Police officer who also happens to be a parent. Her name is Zunnobia, and she told us how much there is a struggle for hard-working, even middle-class families who just want the best for their children, how difficult that struggle is to find quality, affordable childcare for early care and learning. This police officer also told me and told those in the room how all too often in her work as a police officer, she sees teenagers or young people who did not have the benefit of high-quality care and early learning.

This is another example from Pennsylvania. This is what Deanna, a parent, tells us, and I am quoting just in part:

Each month, with two children in daycare, our payment exceeded our mortgage payment.

So it is not the second highest cost but the highest cost in her household.

Deanna continues:

Some months we paid for daycare with our home equity line of credit. It took us 2 years to pay off the debt we acquired. Parents with

young children are really struggling. It is a no-win situation.

That is what Deanna, a parent from Pennsylvania, tells us.

Christina, another Pennsylvanian, a parent, told us that the cost of “daycare is bringing us straight to foreclosure because we cannot afford our mortgage, groceries, diapers, and gas for our one car.”

So this is the real world and this is the real life of a struggling family but especially struggling—even in a recovery—with the cost of childcare.

Let me talk for a moment about the component parts of the act. The Child CARE Act is legislation that will ensure that families with infants and toddlers who are living at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level, which we know is approximately \$40,000 for a family of three—it will help those families who need childcare have access to that high-quality care. The act will further the purposes of the child care and development block grant by raising quality standards and by providing resources necessary to make those higher quality standards a reality and available to families across the Nation. Over a 10-year period, we estimate that the legislation could help over 1 million additional children under the age of 4 gain access to high-quality childcare.

Part of achieving higher quality care is ensuring that childcare providers are receiving an appropriate level of support and that childcare workers are compensated fairly for their expertise. Unfortunately, across the Nation, the average childcare worker often makes below poverty wages. According to the 2013 National Survey of Early Care and Education, the median wage for center-based childcare staff was \$9.30 an hour, about \$19,000 a year. Just imagine that. The people who we believe are the best qualified and the most dedicated to taking care of our children, who will give them that early care and the learning that goes with it, the people whom we entrust with our most treasured asset, our children, in too many places in this country, those same workers are making just \$19,000 a year. This means that childcare workers on average make less than parking lot attendants, less than manicurists, and less than massage therapists. So if we really care about our children, I think we would pay them more than some of the occupations I just mentioned. Caring for and nurturing infants and toddlers requires specialized knowledge and competencies that are not easily developed and should not be taken for granted.

I believe and I think most Members of Congress, either in the Senate or in the House, believe that our children deserve quality. They deserve quality care and learning, but they especially deserve the quality that comes with someone who is paid an adequate wage and has a level of expertise and competency to provide that child with the kind of early care and learning she has a right to expect.

Childcare funding is critically important not only to families in Pennsylvania and across the Nation, but, of course, it is critical if we are going to meet that demand that our workforce must meet. The children who learn more now will earn more later.

We also know that this legislation is an opportunity to finally, at long last, make that historic commitment to these same families. We know the return on investment, if that is all someone wants to focus on, is return on investment. I know some people like numbers sometimes better than testimonials from parents. But if your only concern is return on investment, this is a good deal. Return on investment in terms of high-quality early care and learning is as high as \$17 for \$1. That is a pretty good deal anywhere in the country. We want to emphasize the return on investment, but I also believe at the same time that we have to focus on the life of that child and that child's prospects for future employment to contribute to our economy.

We have to make this issue a priority. If we really care about economic growth, GDP growth, competing in a world economy, and having a skilled workforce, all those high aspirations, all those goals we talk about a lot, it starts with early care and learning. A child cannot earn what she should be able to earn if she doesn't have the opportunity for early care and learning—high-quality early care and learning.

We can spend up to \$40,000 a year on incarceration and thousands on drug treatment and/or special education or we can spend a small fraction of that now on early care and learning and give children both a healthy and a smart start in life.

I urge my colleagues, when it comes before them, to support the Child CARE Act that has been introduced today.

Mr. President, let me conclude with some brief comments about another related issue for our kids—lead poisoning.

What has happened in Flint, MI, is both horrific and inexcusable. No one should accept any excuse for what happened there. I commend Senator STABENOW and Senator PETERS for shining a light on what occurred in their home State.

But, unfortunately, this is an issue that involves not just the State of Michigan, not just the city of Flint, this is a nationwide problem, especially on the eastern seaboard. Unfortunately, many communities around the country have numbers that are even worse, even higher than the Flint numbers.

By one example, Pennsylvania—one of the largest States in the Union—18 cities in Pennsylvania are reporting higher levels of lead exposure among children than Flint. Let me say that again—higher levels than Flint. In Flint, 3.2 percent of children exceeded the danger threshold for lead exposure, tested levels of 5 or more micrograms

per deciliter of blood. So 5 or more micrograms is the danger level, and Flint was at 3.2. Where were some cities in Pennsylvania that, as I said, have higher numbers? Instead of being at 5 or 3.2, this is what we see in Pennsylvania: Allentown, 23; Altoona, 20.5; my hometown of Scranton, 20 percent; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh—our largest cities, the two largest cities and the most urban parts of our State—were at 10 and 8 respectively, which is lower than the other Pennsylvania cities but still higher than Flint. In Pennsylvania, the primary source for childhood lead poisoning is not water but, rather, deteriorating infrastructure and exposure to the remnants of lead-based paint, paint dust, and chips. That is a problem in our State, but there are other States, especially on the eastern seaboard, that have a similar problem.

We must ensure that children who have been exposed to high levels of lead receive all—and I mean that literally—all of the followup services they need to reach their full potential. Whether that is remedial, medical, or educational, we need to be there for those children.

I supported funding for the Centers for Disease Control's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, which supports State and local public health departments working to identify cases of childhood lead exposure. But that is just but one step. We have a lot more to do on this issue.

I will conclude by saying that we should take action on childcare to make sure that it is affordable and that it is of a high quality so that especially poor children can learn more now and earn more later. It is very difficult to learn, grow, and succeed if you have the disadvantage of not only not having childcare and early learning but the additional burden of high levels of lead. These are challenges that we face as a country, and these are challenges that both Houses and both parties must confront.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, tomorrow the Senate will be bringing up the Customs bill that I intend to support moving to. I believe it has a number of good provisions, and I hope to be able to support its final passage.

But first, I want to bring attention to the weakened currency provisions that the conference report included. This is not the language that initially passed the Senate, but instead is much weaker.

The Senate, several times, has affirmed the need to provide the Treasury Department and the Department of Commerce tools to prevent currency manipulation.

In 2011, the Senate passed such a bill to provide the Commerce Department

with enforcement mechanisms by a vote of 63-35.

Second, in 2013, 60 Senators signed a letter to the U.S. Trade Representative, calling for the inclusion of enforceable currency provisions in Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Finally, in May of 2015, the Senate passed by a 78-to-20 vote this Customs enforcement bill, which, for the first time, included new tools that are necessary to defend American manufacturers from foreign currency manipulations—the language to confront currency cheating that the Treasury Department acknowledges is occurring, but they have refused to take action to confront it.

That original bill would have required, where this kind of currency manipulation occurs, action be taken to fix currency manipulation. Unfortunately, that language was removed from the conference report.

I think it is time—and I think a bipartisan majority of this Senate believes it is time—for us to pass enforceable currency protection measures and make sure they make it to the President's desk.

In June of 2015, a New York Times poll showed that 63 percent of Americans believe that trade restrictions are necessary, and only 16 percent of Americans believe that the Trans-Pacific Partnership would actually increase American jobs. I am absolutely convinced the American people are correct on that, based on a study of previous trade agreements and the analysis of studies by Tufts University and other groups.

A May 2015 poll conducted by Ipsos, a leading polling and communications firm, found that 73 percent of the U.S. public believes Congress should oppose any “international trade agreement that does not specifically prohibit currency manipulation.” That is a strong polling number.

A second Ipsos poll, conducted last year, found that 79 percent of respondents said that it was important for the trade deal to include enforceable currency protections.

In August, the Chinese Government devalued its currency 4 percent, creating a regional currency war in that area involving Australia, Malaysia, and South Korea. All those fell against the United States dollar, making their imports to the United States less expensive and our exports to their countries more expensive. It happens just that way.

Former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, one of the great heroes of the economic rebound of the 1980s, has said that years of trade negotiations can be wiped out in minutes by currency manipulation. I don't think there is any doubt about that.

These depreciations throughout Asia further disadvantage American workers because they force our workers to compete against international competitors who receive discounts, in effect, on their exported goods in the

form of artificially depressed currencies. These devaluations have a real impact.

I have talked at length to steel manufacturers in my State. They have all told me that steel manufacturing is being hammered by this kind of currency manipulation, dumping, and other unfair, improper trade policies. But they specifically mentioned currency. Foreign market manipulations have virtually eliminated profit margins that were already slim in the steel industry.

I had a conversation a few hours ago with a major paper company which said that currency manipulations have hurt their exports. They are still making the exports, but it has eliminated their profit. It is very problematic for them. They have to have profit, but they are trying to maintain their production, keep Americans working, and keep the plants operating, even though their profit margin has been hurt substantially by currency manipulation.

In June of 2015, eBay reported that international currency fluctuations eliminated 8 percent of its sales. Instead of 6 percent sales growth, the company reported a 2 percent decline. Our foreign competitors are exporting their unemployment to the United States. That is the way it is done: You reduce your currency, and you export your products to the United States at a lower price. Our foreign competitors keep their people working and undermine the ability of American manufacturers to keep their employees working. Sometimes American plants are totally closed.

A December 1 Wall Street Journal article highlighted the fact that the Chinese yuan had increased against most other major currencies but fallen 3 percent against the dollar. They let it decline against the dollar, thereby maintaining their trade advantage with the United States—their trade surplus, our trade deficit with China. Our trade deficit with China increased during January and increased substantially during the fourth quarter of last year. Our exports are down, our imports are up, and our trade deficit is up.

A big part of that is improper manipulation of currency by our so-called trading partners. It is time we said no to this. We have the leverage and the capability of doing so. They need us more than we need them.

When Governor Romney ran for President 8 years ago, he was in a debate and explained it very succinctly: If you don't stand up—in this case, to China—they will run over you. Critics say that if we stand up to China, it will create a trade war. But we are in a trade war; we are just not fighting. Finally, he said: And, anyway, they have a lot more to lose than we do in such an event.

We have no obligation—as a matter of fact, we must stop being a patsy for those who take advantage of us. They need our markets. They desperately need to be able to sell huge amounts of