

Union, a unique political and economic union covering much of the European continent and based on the principles of rule of law and representative democracy, which has pursued common policies in economic, security, diplomatic, and political areas and has helped bring unprecedented peace and stability to Europe and its neighbors;

Whereas European integration has been essential in opening and expanding markets, strengthening the rule of law and respect for basic freedoms, and fostering democracy in Europe itself, both in European Union members and aspiring nations;

Whereas, since World War II, the United States has firmly supported and been an active partner in the European integration project, working with Europe to rebuild its war-torn continent through the Marshall Plan and to create an Atlantic security alliance built on shared values and ideals, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to permanently prevent the kind of conflict we had just endured;

Whereas the United States and Europe have since engaged in a close and robust Transatlantic partnership, constructed on a strong foundation of shared values and commitment to democracy, freedom and the rule of law, to the benefit of the United States, Europe, and the rest of the world;

Whereas a strong United States-European Union partnership has helped build our mutual economies, ensured unprecedented peace in Europe, and remains essential to creating a freer, safer, and more prosperous and more interconnected world;

Whereas the Transatlantic economy is the world's largest and wealthiest market and the single most important driver of global economic growth and prosperity, with the United States and European Union together accounting for over half of the world's gross domestic product (GDP), generating \$5,500,000,000,000 in yearly commercial sales and employing up to 15,000,000 workers in domestic jobs on both sides of the Atlantic;

Whereas mutual investment is the backbone of the Transatlantic economy, and the United States and Europe are each other's primary source and destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI);

Whereas the United States and the European Union are each other's largest trading partners, and United States-European Union trade totaled approximately \$687,000,000,000 during 2016, almost double the level at the beginning of the century;

Whereas the Transatlantic economy drives innovation, with the United States and European Union investing more in mutual Research and Development than any other 2 international partners and collaborating across areas of science and technology, including marine and Arctic science, transportation and energy technologies, and health research;

Whereas this historic partnership goes far beyond economic and commercial ties, and the United States and the European Union work together to promote peace and stability, protect human rights, foster democracy and sustainable development, combat global threats like terrorism, and eradicate disease and poverty;

Whereas the United States and the European Union have developed numerous mechanisms to strengthen the Transatlantic relationship and to improve communication and collaboration among our respective governments, including annual European Union-United States Summit meetings and the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, which facilitates meetings between members of the European Parliament and the United States Congress on issues of mutual concern;

Whereas, despite representing approximately 12 percent of the world's population,

the United States and the European Union together provide more than three-quarters of official development assistance worldwide and have established an ongoing Development Dialogue to improve the quality and effectiveness of development aid;

Whereas the United States and the European Union collaborate to promote peace and stability and prevent conflict around the world, working together to address conflicts including those in Syria and Ukraine and confront global security challenges like terrorism, nuclear weapons proliferation, transnational crime, and cybercrime;

Whereas, in pursuit of an integrated, free, and peaceful Europe, the United States and the European Union have worked together to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the Balkans and to advance their cooperation with and integration into institutions like NATO and the European Union.

Whereas, in response to its annexation of Crimea and continued aggression in the sovereign nation of Ukraine, the United States and the European Union imposed and have maintained sanctions to increase the diplomatic and financial costs on the Russian Federation for its illegal actions;

Whereas, in the face of ongoing threats from terrorism, the United States and the European Union cooperate closely to target terrorist financing, secure transportation and borders, provide mutual assistance with cross-border investigations and extraditions, and share information; and

Whereas leaders on both sides of the Atlantic have long recognized the value of and expressed their commitment to the Transatlantic partnership, including—

(1) President John F. Kennedy, who said in 1962 that “we do not regard a strong and united Europe as a rival but as a partner,” and asserted that the United States believed “that a united Europe will be capable of playing a greater role in the common defense, of responding more generously to the needs of poorer nations, of joining with the United States and others in lowering trade barriers, resolving problems of commerce, commodities, and currency, and developing coordinated policies in all economic, political, and diplomatic areas”;

(2) President Ronald Reagan, who addressed the European Parliament in 1985 “to reaffirm to the people of Europe the constancy of the American purpose” and to state that “America remains . . . dedicated to the unity of Europe” and “is at your side today, because, like you, we have not veered from the ideals of the West—the ideals of freedom, liberty, and peace”;

(3) President Barack Obama, who stated in a 2016 address in Germany that “the United States, and the entire world, needs a strong and prosperous and democratic and united Europe. . . because Europe's security and prosperity is inherently indivisible from our own” and recognized that “Europe helps to uphold the norms and rules that can maintain peace and promote prosperity around the world”;

(4) Vice President Mike Pence, who asserted that “our two continents share the same heritage, the same values and above all, the same purpose to promote peace and prosperity through freedom, democracy and the rule of law” and reiterated that the United States “will stand with Europe, today and every day,” while traveling in Europe in February 2017; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the European Union and its member states on the 60th anniversary of the historic signing of the Treaty of Rome;

(2) commends the European Union for its critical role in spreading peace, prosperity, and stability throughout Europe and worldwide, as well as its close and enduring partnership with the United States;

(3) recognizes the challenges the European Union, its Transatlantic partners, and the broader global community continue to face, including an unprecedented migration and refugee crisis, increased Russian aggression and interference, violent extremism, and the rise of nationalist and populist sentiment; and

(4) affirms the desire of the United States Government to strengthen the Transatlantic partnership with the European Union and its member states.

SENATE RESOLUTION 94—DESIGNATING MARCH 2017 AS “NATIONAL READ ALOUD MONTH”

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Ms. HARRIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 94

Whereas medical experts have concluded that reading aloud is the “single most important” activity in which parents can participate in order to prepare their children to read and learn;

Whereas recent research has concluded that, by 3 years of age, there is a gap in early brain development between children whose parents read to them and children whose parents do not;

Whereas Congress has highlighted the importance of early childhood literacy by including funding for State comprehensive literacy plans and targeted funds toward early childhood education programs in the Every Student Succeeds Act (Public Law 114–95; 129 Stat. 1802);

Whereas, in 2013, Read Aloud 15 MINUTES launched a decade-long national campaign highlighting the importance of reading aloud to children, starting from birth; and

Whereas Read Aloud 15 MINUTES now has more than 21 National Leadership Partners and 10,000 grassroots partners, including day care facilities, schools, libraries, health centers, and rotary clubs in all 50 States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2017 as “National Read Aloud Month”;

(2) encourages parents and guardians to read to their children for 15 minutes every day because of the developmental benefits that activity has for children.

SENATE RESOLUTION 95—DESIGNATING MARCH 22, 2017, AS “NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY”

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 95

Whereas rehabilitation counselors conduct assessments, provide counseling, support families, and plan and implement rehabilitation programs for individuals in need of rehabilitation;

Whereas the purpose of professional organizations for rehabilitation counseling and education is to promote the improvement of rehabilitation services available to individuals with disabilities through quality education for counselors and rehabilitation research;

Whereas various professional organizations have vigorously advocated for up-to-date education and training and the maintenance of professional standards in the field of rehabilitation counseling and education, including—

- (1) the National Rehabilitation Association;
- (2) the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association;
- (3) the National Council on Rehabilitation Education;
- (4) the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association;
- (5) the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association;
- (6) the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification;
- (7) the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation; and
- (8) the Council on Rehabilitation Education;

Whereas, in March of 1983, the president of the National Council on Rehabilitation Education testified before the Subcommittee on Select Education of the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives and was instrumental in bringing to the attention of Congress the need for qualified rehabilitation counselors; and

Whereas credentialed rehabilitation counselors provide a higher quality of service to individuals in need of rehabilitation and the development of an accreditation system for rehabilitation counselors supports the continued education of rehabilitation counselors: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 22, 2017, as “National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day”; and

(2) commends—

(A) rehabilitation counselors for their dedication and hard work in providing counseling to individuals in need of rehabilitation; and

(B) professional organizations for their efforts in assisting individuals who require rehabilitation.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 96—DESIGNATING MARCH 25, 2017, AS “NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY”**

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, and Ms. HASSAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 96

Whereas a group of permanent disorders of the development of movement and posture that are attributed to nonprogressive disturbances that occur in the developing brain is referred to as “cerebral palsy”;

Whereas cerebral palsy, the most common motor disability in children, is caused by damage to 1 or more specific areas of the developing brain, which usually occurs during fetal development before, during, or after birth;

Whereas the majority of children who have cerebral palsy are born with cerebral palsy, but cerebral palsy may be undetected for months or years;

Whereas 75 percent of individuals with cerebral palsy also have 1 or more developmental disabilities, including epilepsy, intellectual disability, autism, visual impairment, or blindness;

Whereas, according to information released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—

(1) the prevalence of cerebral palsy is not changing over time; and

(2) an estimated 1 in 323 children has cerebral palsy;

Whereas approximately 764,000 individuals in the United States are affected by cerebral palsy;

Whereas, although there is no cure for cerebral palsy, treatment often improves the capabilities of a child with cerebral palsy;

Whereas scientists and researchers are hopeful for breakthroughs in cerebral palsy research;

Whereas researchers across the United States conduct important research projects involving cerebral palsy; and

Whereas the Senate can raise awareness of cerebral palsy in the public and the medical community: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 25, 2017, as “National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day”;

(2) encourages each individual in the United States to become better informed about and aware of cerebral palsy; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Executive Director of Reaching for the Stars: A Foundation of Hope for Children with Cerebral Palsy.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 97—AUTHORIZING THE PRINTING OF A COLLECTION OF THE RULES OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE**

Mr. SHELBY (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 97

*Resolved*, That a collection of the rules of the committees of the Senate, together with related materials, be printed as a Senate document, and that there be printed 250 additional copies of such document for the use of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

**AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET**

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have 7 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY**

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 23, 2017 at 10 a.m. in 325 Russell Senate Office Building.

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 23, 2017, at 9:30 a.m., in open session.

**COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS**

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 23, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Nomination of Mr. Jay Clayton to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission.”

**COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 23, 2017, at 9:30 a.m., in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to continue a hear-

ing entitled “The Nomination of the Honorable Neil M. Gorsuch.”

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE**

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Thursday, March 23, 2017 from 2 p.m., in room SH-219 of the Senate Hart Office Building.

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL**

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 23, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in open session.

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND SECURITY**

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 23, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold Subcommittee Hearing on “FAA Reauthorization: Perspectives on Improving Airport Infrastructure and Aviation Manufacturing.”

**PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR**

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the technology fellow on my staff, Christopher Soghoian, be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of this Congress.

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

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a member of my staff, Tannis Fox, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 115th Congress.

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

**APPOINTMENTS**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader and ranking member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 114-328, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service: Alan Khazai of Massachusetts and Mark Gearan of New York.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 6968(a), appoints the following Senator to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Naval Academy: the Honorable JAMES LANKFORD of Oklahoma (Committee on Appropriations).

**NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY**

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 96, submitted earlier today.

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