Against Children Task Force Program, and for other purposes.

S. 801

At the request of Mr. Lee, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 801, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector.

S. 816

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 816, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow rollovers from 529 programs to ABLE accounts.

S. 817

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 817, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the age requirement with respect to eligibility for qualified ABLE programs.

S. 818

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 818, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals with disabilities to save additional amounts in their ABLE accounts above the current annual maximum contribution if they work and earn income.

S. 823

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 823, a bill to ensure the digital contents of electronic equipment and online accounts belonging to or in the possession of United States persons entering or exiting the United States are adequately protected at the border, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 5

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 5, a joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment.

S.J. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 6, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to equal rights for men and women.

S.J. RES. 28

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to accidental release prevention requirements of risk management programs under the Clean Air Act.

S. RES. 99

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 99, a resolution recognizing the 11 African-American soldiers of the 333rd Field Artillery Battalion who were massacred in Wereth, Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.

S. RES. 106

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 106, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to support the territorial integrity of Georgia.

S. RES. 108

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 108, a resolution reaffirming the commitment of the United States to the United States-Egypt partnership.

S. RES. 109

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 109, a resolution encouraging the Government of Pakistan to release Aasiya Noreen, internationally known as Asia Bibi, and reform its religiously intolerant laws regarding blasphemy.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. PAUL (for himself and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 827. A bill to provide for the sealing or expungement of records relating to Federal nonviolent criminal offenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Record Expungement Designed to Enhance Employment Act, or REDEEM Act. This bill would take meaningful steps towards allowing returning citizens to obtain employment. As President George W. Bush said in his 2004 State of the Union Address, ''America is the land of the second chance, and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life.'' The REDEEM Act would help provide people with that second chance after their incarceration. I thank Senator PAUL for his tireless work with me on the REDEEM Act.

In the last 30 years, the number of incarcerated people in the United States has drastically increased. Since 1980, the federal prison population alone has grown by nearly 800 percent and American taxpayers are left paying for the bill. In fiscal year 2014, the Bureau of Prisons accounted for a quarter of the Department of Justice's budget at $6.9 billion. Our bloated criminal justice system wastes priceless human potential and fails to make our communities safer. It also fails to adequately prepare the over 600,000 people each year who are released from prison for their return to the community.

A high number of Americans living in our communities have criminal convictions. About 70 million people in the United States have been arrested or convicted of a crime. That means almost one in three adults in the United States has a criminal record. In fact, in our Nation's Capital alone, an estimated 1 in 10 DC residents has a criminal record.

The American Bar Association has identified over 44,500 ''collateral consequences''—or legal constraints—placed on what individuals with records can do once they are released from prison. Of those, up to 70 percent are related to employment.

Today, a criminal conviction is a modern-day scarlet letter that, because of the so-called War on Drugs, has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color. For example, African-American men with a conviction are 40 percent less likely to receive an interview. And the likelihood that Latino men with a record will receive an interview or be offered a job is 18 percent smaller than the likelihood for white men.

To increase public safety, reduce recidivism, and protect the future of our children, I am proud to re-introduce the REDEEM Act. This bill would incentivize states to raise the age of original jurisdiction for criminal courts to 18 years old. Trying juveniles who have committed low-level, nonviolent crimes as adults is counterproductive. They do not emerge from prison reformed and ready to reintegrate into school, nor will the criminal record they have help them obtain a job.

This change in law is important for protecting our children's futures. For kids in the dozen states that treat 17- and even 16-year-olds as adults, no longer would getting into a school yard scuffle result in an adult record that could follow an individual for the rest of their life, restrict access to a college degree, limit job prospects, or lead to likely recidivism.

The bill would enhance Federal juvenile record confidentiality and provide for automatic expungement of records for kids who commit nonviolent crimes before they turn 15 and automatic sealing of records for those who commit nonviolent crimes after they turn 15.

The bill would ban the very cruel and counterproductive practice of juvenile solitary confinement that can have immediate and long-term detrimental effects on a youth's mental and physical health. In fact, the majority of suicides by juveniles in prisons occur when young people are placed in solitary confinement. Other nations even consider it torture.

The REDEEM Act would, for adults, offer the first broad-based federal path to the sealing of criminal records. A person who commits a nonviolent crime will be able to petition a court for sealing of the record, so their future job prospects are not harmed.

And the bill would enhance the accuracy of criminal justice records. Employers requesting a background check from the FBI will be provided with only relevant and accurate information thanks to a provision that will protect job applicants by improving the quality of the Bureau's background check.

Think about this: 17 million background checks were done by the FBI in 2013, many of them for private providers, and upward of half of them were

inaccurate or incomplete, often causing people to lose a job, miss an economic opportunity, and be trapped with few economic options other than to reoffend in order to feed a child or pay a debt.

The bill helps guard against gender disparities in federal juvenile delinquency proceedings. Additionally, it would ensure that programming and services are distributed evenly among male and female juveniles. Oftentimes, juvenile females receive less programming and resources than males because of the smaller size of the female prison population. This is wrong and this bill take a step forward to fix the problem.

Finally, the REDEEM Act would lift a ban on two critical Federal benefits: the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. The intent of those Federal programs is to keep low-income families from going hungry. Yet those convicted of drug felonies lose the right to obtain such benefits. Once an individual has paid his or her debt to society, a path to the reinstatement of those benefits should be available.

I am proud to introduce the REDEEM Act today. Again, I thank Senator PAUL for partnering with me on this bill. I urge this bill's speedy passage.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 836. A bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to exclude a loan secured by a non-owner occupied 1- to 4-family dwelling from the definition of a member business loan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, most of us have heard the metaphor that small businesses are the engines that power our economy. What we don't hear people talk about as much is the fuel that feeds the engines: capital. Without capital, entrepreneurs cannot see their ideas to fruition, successful business owners cannot expand to meet the needs of the market, and eager job seekers must take their skills elsewhere. Without capital, Main Street falters, and Wall Street keeps the advantage.

Today, more than 9 years after the start of the great recession and many policy reforms later, access to capital remains a challenge. This capital drought hampers small business growth, economic development, and job creation in Oregon and across the country. Despite this, government regulation continues to tie the hands of many willing small businesses lenders—namely, credit unions. According to some estimates, credit unions could lend an additional $11 billion to small businesses if Congress loosened restraints on credit union business lending.

With this in mind, I am pleased to introduce today the Credit Union Residential Loan Parity Act with Senator MURKOWSKI. This bill would increase access to capital by exempting certain loans from the member business lending cap imposed on credit unions. Currently, loans made for one- to four-person, non-owner-occupied housing are treated as business loans when they are made by credit unions. As such, these types of loans count against a credit union's business lending cap, effectively limiting a credit union's ability to provide loans to small businesses. Our legislation would address this issue by allowing credit unions to treat these types of loans as residential loans—the same treatment these kinds of loans receive when made by other financial institutions. In effect, the bill would exempt residential loans from the business lending cap. This exemption would increase access to capital for small businesses, which in turn would create jobs and grow our local economies. In addition to generally increasing credit union lending, our legislation would directly free up capital for small businesses that make much needed investments in rental housing.

I am hopeful that this legislation will be received by colleagues for what it is—a simple step to help ensure America's small businesses have access to the fuel they need to power our economy.

It is my hope that the Senate will pass this legislation swiftly.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 836

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Credit Union Residential Loan Parity Act''.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF A NON-OWNER OCCUPIED 1- TO 4-FAMILY DWELLING.

(a) REMOVAL FROM MEMBER BUSINESS LOAN LIMITATION.—Section 107A(c)(1)(B)(i) of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1757a(c)(1)(B)(i)) is amended by striking ''that is the primary residence of a member''.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act or the amendment made by this Act shall preclude the National Credit Union Administration from treating an extension of credit that is fully secured by a lien on a 1- to 4-family dwelling that is not the primary residence of a member as a member business loan for purposes other than the member business loan limitation requirements under section 107A of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1757a).

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 842. A bill to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2017, also known as the Fair Chance Act. This criminal justice reform bill is designed to help returning citizens successfully obtain jobs and reintegrate into society. As the nation's largest employer, it is time the Federal Government leads by example and delays the criminal history inquiry until later in the hiring process. I thank Senator JOHNSON for his leadership on the Fair Chance Act, and I deeply appreciate Senators BALDWIN, ERNST, BROWN, and PORTMAN for joining the bill as original cosponsors.

Everyone deserves the dignity of work and the opportunity for a second chance to earn a living. But far too many Americans who return home from behind bars have to disclose convictions on their initial employment application or initial job interview that often serve as insurmountable barriers to employment. This legislation would ensure that people with convictions—who have paid their debt to society and want to turn their lives around—have a fair chance to work.

By encouraging Federal employers to focus on an individual's qualifications and merit and not solely on past mistakes, the Fair Chance Act would remove burdensome and unnecessary obstacles that prevent formerly incarcerated people from reaching their full potential and contributing to society. It would also help reduce recidivism, combat poverty, and prevent violence in our communities by helping people get back to work.

Creating employment opportunities for our returning citizens benefits public safety. With little hope of obtaining a decent paying job, returning citizens are often left with few options but to return to a life of crime. A 2011 study in the Justice Quarterly concluded that the lack of employment was the single most negative determinant of recidivism. A report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that of the over 400,000 State prisoners released in 2005, 67.8 percent of them were rearrested within 3 years of their release, and 76.6 percent were rearrested within 5 years of their release.

Creating employment opportunities for our returning citizens strengthens our economy. Poor job prospects for people with records reduced our Nation's gross domestic product in 2008 between $57 billion and $65 billion. With an increasingly competitive global economy and to maintain America's competitive advantage, we must promote employment of all Americans.

Today, I introduce the Fair Chance Act, which would help eliminate barriers to employment for formerly incarcerated people and bring America closer to truly being a land of opportunity for all. It would preclude the federal government—including the executive, legislative, and judicial

branches—from requesting criminal history information from applicants until they reach the conditional offer stage.

This bill strikes the right balance. It would allow qualified people with criminal records to get their foot in the door and be judged on their own merit. At the same time, the legislation would allow employers to know an individual's criminal history before the job applicant is hired.

This bill would prohibit federal contractors from requesting criminal history information from candidates for positions within the scope of Federal contracts until a conditional job offer has been extended. Companies that do business with the Federal Government and receive Federal funds should espouse good hiring practices. The Fair Chance Act would permit Federal contractors to inquire about criminal history earlier in the hiring process if the job requires a candidate to access classified information.

The bill includes exceptions for sensitive positions where criminal history inquiries are necessary earlier in the application process. Exceptions include positions involving classified information, sensitive national security duties, armed forces, and law enforcement jobs, and jobs where criminal history information is legally required.

Finally, the Fair Chance Act would require the Bureau of Justice Statistics, in coordination with the U.S. Census Bureau, to report to Congress on the employment statistics of returning citizens. Currently, no comprehensive tracking of data on the employment histories of people with convictions exists. This provision would change that and allow us to better understand the scope of the problem people with convictions face when trying to find a job.

I am proud to reintroduce the Fair Chance Act. I want to again thank the bill cosponsors and their leadership on this issue. I urge this legislation's speedy passage.

By Ms. HASSAN:

S. 848. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to encourage entrepreneurship by providing loan deferment and loan cancellation for founders and employees of small business startups, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce my first bill in the U.S. Senate—a bill to help relieve the burden of student debt for young entrepreneurs from New Hampshire and the entire country.

Most of us have seen personally how heavily the burden of student loan debt weighs on students and families across New Hampshire. Less visible, but no less important, is how student loan debt is weighing down our economy—stifling innovation and job creation.

Student loan debt is preventing the next generation of entrepreneurs and innovators from opening their own businesses. A New York Times report highlighted that the percentage of new entrepreneurs between 20–34 years old fell to 25 percent in 2014, down from almost 35 percent in 1996. And Gallup found that 19 percent of graduates with student loan debt say they have delayed starting a business because of it.

It is time to once again unleash the entrepreneurial potential of our young people into creating the jobs of the future. That is why this week I introduced the Reigniting Opportunity for Innovators, ROI, Act, the first bill I am writing as a U.S. Senator, which would help provide the relief necessary for young entrepreneurs to start up and grow innovative small businesses.

The ROI Act will allow eligible founders and full-time employees of certified small business to defer their Federal student loan payments and interest accrual for up to 3 years while launching a startup. This will help give graduates the financial stability they need to take the risk of starting a business that can create good-paying jobs.

Additionally, this legislation provides an additional incentive for startup companies to move off the beaten path to help revitalize struggling communities. If the startup is located in an economically distressed area, founders and employees will be eligible for cancellation of up to $20,000 in student loans.

The ROI Act is an important step that we can take now to help young entrepreneurs and lay the foundation for a new generation of economic growth.

New businesses are historically the top job creators in our country, and small businesses are the driving force of New Hampshire's economy. But to get the education they need to compete for jobs in the 21st century economy, students are taking on more debt than ever before. In 2015, college graduates left school with an average of $30,000 of student loan debt, and New Hampshire students had the highest average student debt in the country.

At a roundtable discussion at Keene State College, I heard from students about the challenges posed by their student loan debt. One young woman told me that she hoped to start her own business but that she would likely have to put off that goal for another 10 years because of her student loan debt.

Any entrepreneur will tell you that getting a small business off the ground is expensive. These costs, mixed with student loan debt, make it even more daunting for young entrepreneurs to consider taking the leap of starting a new business. Student debt decreases the cash flow of potential entrepreneurs, it hurts their ability to build equity, and it can negatively affect credit scores and their ability to secure financing.

With the deck too often stacked against them, we need to be doing everything we can to support young entrepreneurs looking to start the innovative businesses that will drive job-creation and move our economy forward.

The ROI Act would work to drive our 21st century economy, but we know that we have more work to do to bring down the costs of higher education and ensure that New Hampshire students, families, and innovative businesses have the support they need. In addition to working to pass this commonsense legislation, I will continue to focus on expanding Pell grants, lowering interest rates for student loans and allowing students to refinance, and increasing apprenticeship and job training opportunities.

The ROI Act is an important step that we can take now to help young entrepreneurs and lay the foundation for a new generation of economic growth, and I look forward to working with members of both parties to pass this commonsense bill.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 850. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish fair and consistent eligibility requirements for graduate medical schools operating outside the United States and Canada; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 850

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Foreign Medical School Accountability Fairness Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

To establish consistent eligibility requirements for graduate medical schools operating outside of the United States and Canada in order to increase accountability and protect American students and taxpayer dollars.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Three for-profit schools in the Caribbean receive nearly ¾ of all Federal funding under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.) that goes to students enrolled at foreign graduate medical schools, despite those three schools being exempt from meeting the same eligibility requirements as the majority of graduate medical schools located outside of the United States and Canada.

(2) The National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation and the Department of Education recommend that all foreign graduate medical schools should be required to meet the same eligibility requirements to participate in Federal funding under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.).

(3) The attrition rate at United States medical schools averaged 3.4 percent in 2014, while rates at for-profit Caribbean medical schools have been known to reach 30 percent.

(4) In 2016, residency match rates for foreign trained graduates averaged 54 percent compared to 94 percent for graduates of medical schools in the United States.

(5) On average, students at for-profit medical schools operating outside of the United

States and Canada amass more student debt than those at medical schools in the United States.

SEC. 4. REPEAL GRANDFATHER PROVISIONS.

Section 102(a)(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

''(i) in the case of a graduate medical school located outside the United States—

''(I) at least 60 percent of those enrolled in, and at least 60 percent of the graduates of, the graduate medical school outside the United States were not persons described in section 484(a)(5) in the year preceding the year for which a student is seeking a loan under part D of title IV; and

''(II) at least 75 percent of the individuals who were students or graduates of the graduate medical school outside the United States or Canada (both nationals of the United States and others) taking the examinations administered by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates received a passing score in the year preceding the year for which a student is seeking a loan under part D of title IV;''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(iii), by adding at the end the following:

''(V) EXPIRATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of a graduate medical school described in subclause (I) to qualify for participation in the loan programs under part D of title IV pursuant to this clause shall expire beginning on the first July 1 following the date of enactment of the Foreign Medical School Accountability Fairness Act of 2017.''.

SEC. 5. LOSS OF ELIGIBILITY.

If a graduate medical school loses eligibility to participate in the loan programs under part D of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq.) due to the enactment of the amendments made by section 4, then a student enrolled at such graduate medical school on or before the date of enactment of this Act may, notwithstanding such loss of eligibility, continue to be eligible to receive a loan under such part D while attending such graduate medical school in which the student was enrolled upon the date of enactment of this Act, subject to the student continuing to meet all applicable requirements for satisfactory academic progress, until the earliest of—

(1) withdrawal by the student from the graduate medical school;

(2) completion of the program of study by the student at the graduate medical school; or

(3) the fourth June 30 after such loss of eligibility.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. CARPER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. UDALL, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 861. A bill to provide for the compensation of Federal employees affected by lapses in appropriations; read the first time.

S. 861

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Employee Fair Treatment Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. COMPENSATION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY A LAPSE IN APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 1341 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''An officer'' and inserting ''Except as specified in this subchapter or any other provision of law, an officer''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c)(1) In this subsection—

''(A) the term 'covered lapse in appropriations' means any lapse in appropriations that begins on or after April 28, 2017; and

''(B) the term 'excepted employee' means an excepted employee or an employee performing emergency work, as such terms are defined by the Office of Personnel Management.

''(2) Each Federal employee furloughed as a result of a covered lapse in appropriations shall be paid for the period of the lapse in appropriations, and each excepted employee who is required to perform work during a covered lapse in appropriations shall be paid for such work, at the employee's standard rate of pay, at the earliest date possible after the lapse in appropriations ends, regardless of scheduled pay dates.

''(3) During a covered lapse in appropriations, each excepted employee who is required to perform work shall be entitled to use leave under chapter 63 of title 5, or any other applicable law governing the use of leave by the excepted employee, for which compensation shall be paid at the earliest date possible after the lapse in appropriations ends, regardless of scheduled pay dates.''.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 114—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON HUMANITARIAN CRISES IN NIGERIA, SOMALIA, SOUTH SUDAN, AND YEMEN

Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 114

Whereas Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen are all in famine, pre-famine, or ''at risk of famine'' stages in 2017;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), 20,000,000 people are at risk of starvation within the next six months in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

Whereas, on March 22, 2017, Mr. Yves Daccord, the Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, testified that the crisis represents ''one of the most critical humanitarian issues to face mankind since the end of the Second World War'' and warned that ''we are at the brink of a humanitarian mega-crisis unprecedented in recent history'';

Whereas, according to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), ''More than 5.1 million people face severe food insecurity in northeastern Nigeria'';

Whereas, according to USAID, ''An estimated 6.2 million people—more than half of Somalia's total population—currently require urgent humanitarian assistance.'';

Whereas, according to USAID, ''An estimated 5.5 million people—nearly half of South Sudan's population—will face life threatening hunger by July.'';

Whereas, according to USAID, in Yemen, ''More than seventeen million people—an astounding 60% of the country's population—are food insecure, including seven million people who are unable to survive without food assistance.'';

Whereas, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), ''Some 22 million children have been left hungry, sick, displaced and out of school in the four countries. Nearly 1.4 million are at imminent risk of death this year from severe malnutrition.'';

Whereas the humanitarian crises in each of these regions are, to varying degrees, manmade and preventable—exacerbated by armed conflict, disregard for international humanitarian law, and deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access;

Whereas parties to the conflicts have harassed, attacked, and killed humanitarian workers, blocking and hindering humanitarian access and depriving the world's most hungry people of the food they need;

Whereas humanitarian actors, coordinated by UNOCHA, are appealing for $5,600,000,000 in 2017 to address famines in Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria, and Somalia, $4,400,000,000 of which is required urgently; and

Whereas Mr. Daccord testified on March 22, 2017, ''Our message is clear: immediate, decisive action is needed to prevent vast numbers of people starving to death.'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) It is the sense of the Senate that—

(A) United States national security interests and the values of the American people demand that the United States lead an urgent and comprehensive international diplomatic effort to address obstacles in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen that are preventing humanitarian aid from being delivered to millions of people who desperately need it;

(B) the President should encourage other governments to join the United States in providing the resources necessary to meet the $5,600,000,000 UNOCHA appeal to address the humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

(C) parties to the conflicts in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen must respect fully international humanitarian law by allowing and facilitating rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need and respecting and protecting humanitarian and medical relief personnel and objects; and

(D) the President, working with international partners, should work to identify and document violations of international humanitarian law in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen seeking to bring perpetrators to justice where possible; and

(2) the Senate—

(A) urges the President, in close coordination with international partners, to employ every appropriate strategy to persuade the Government of South Sudan to stop blocking aid for people who desperately need it;

(B) calls on the President to notify Congress without delay if the Government of South Sudan does not immediately and fully respect international humanitarian law so that Congress can work with President to impose additional costs on the government and leaders of South Sudan for their deplorable actions;

(C) urges the President to press the Government of Nigeria to take tangible and immediate steps to ensure accountability for security forces that violate human rights and fail to cooperate fully with international aid efforts;

(D) calls on the President to send the Secretary of State or other high level representative to attend the upcoming United Kingdom's Ministerial Conference on Somalia and publicly announce a contribution to the