

I think that approach is a big reason he has earned the respect of lawyers and judges from across the spectrum, by the way. If you look at the people who say this guy is a great judge, it goes all the way across the political spectrum.

Professor Laurence Tribe of Harvard Law School, an advisor to former President Obama, said Judge Gorsuch is “a brilliant, terrific guy who would do the Court’s work with distinction.” Those of you who know Laurence Tribe, he is well-regarded, considered to be a liberal thinker on many issues. But he has looked at the guy, and he has looked at his record. He knows him. He says he is brilliant, terrific, and will do the Court’s work with distinction.

Neal Katyal—you have heard about him. He was the Acting Solicitor General for President Obama, a guy who knows a thing or two about arguing before the Supreme Court. He said Judge Gorsuch’s record “should give the American people confidence that he will not compromise principle to favor the President who appointed him. . . . He’s a fair and decent man.”

This goes to what the ABA said about him: Independent. He will protect the independence of the judiciary.

Look, he is smart, no question about it. You saw him answer those questions. You have seen his record. He is qualified, as we talked about. He is certainly a mainstream judge, when you look at his opinions—98 percent of the time in the majority, 97 percent of the time unanimous. Three-judge panels. He has the support—the bipartisan support—of a majority of the Senate.

By the way, the American people, as they have plugged into this, also think he ought to be confirmed. There is a recent poll by the Huffington Post, which is not considered a conservative newspaper or entity. They said the people want us to confirm Neil Gorsuch by a 17-point margin. Why? Because they watched this. They looked at the guy. They saw the hearings. They looked at his record. People believe he is the right person to represent them on the Supreme Court.

So, again, while I am disappointed this process has become so polarized and divisive here in this body, I am glad to see this good man take a seat in our Nation’s highest Court. I believe he deserves our support.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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.

TRIBUTE TO FREY TODD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today it is my privilege to celebrate the retirement of Frey Todd, the “Mayor for Life” of Eubank, KY.

In the last census, Eubank was home to fewer than 400 Kentuckians, but despite their small number, the Eubank community is proud of their town and their mayor.

Since the 1960s, Todd has served his community on the town board. He spent 10 years as the chair of the board, and when Kentucky reorganized municipal governments in 1982 and the position of mayor became available, he proudly was elected its first mayor. And every 4 years since, Todd has been elected by his constituents to be their mayor.

Over his 35-year tenure as mayor, Todd has overseen major projects like the construction of the senior citizens center and the Eubank Water System.

In a small town like Eubank, the people and their government are almost as close as family. Throughout his entire career, Mayor Todd has shown his passion for his constituents, and they have returned the affection.

At the age of 82, Todd announced his retirement from public service. I would like to join with all the people of Eubank to thank him for his years of dedication and congratulate him on an impressive career.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee’s intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-80, concerning the Army Corps of Engineers’ proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Kuwait for airbase construction and services estimated to cost \$319 million. After this letter is deliv-

ered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-80

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Kuwait.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$ 0 million.
Other \$319 million.
Total \$319 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Non-MDE: Design, construction, and procurement of key airfield operations, command and control, readiness, sustainment, and life support facilities for the Al Mubarak Airbase in Kuwait. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will provide project management, engineering services, technical support, facility and infrastructure assessments, surveys, planning, programming, design, acquisition, contract administration, construction management, and other technical services for the construction of facilities and infrastructure for the airbase. The overall project includes, among other features, a main operations center, hangars, training facilities, barracks, warehouses, support facilities, and other infrastructure required for a fully functioning airbase.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) (HBE).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: N/A.

(vi) Sales Commission. Fee, etc., Paid. Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 6, 2017.

* As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Kuwait—Facilities and Infrastructure Construction Support Service

The Government of Kuwait has requested possible sale for the design, construction, and procurement of key airfield operations, command and control, readiness, sustainment, and life support facilities for the Al Mubarak Airbase in Kuwait. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will provide project management, engineering services, technical support, facility and infrastructure assessments, surveys, planning, programming, design, acquisition, contract administration, construction management, and other technical services for the construction of facilities and infrastructure for the airbase. The overall project includes, among other features, a main operations center, hangars, training facilities, barracks, warehouses, support facilities, and other infrastructure required for a fully functioning airbase. The estimated total cost is \$319 million.

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by supporting the infrastructure needs of a friendly country which has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

The facilities being constructed are similar to other facilities built in the past by USACE in other Middle Eastern countries. These facilities replace existing facilities and will provide autonomous airbase operations to the Kuwait Air Force. The new airbase will ensure the continued readiness of

the Kuwait Air Force and allow for the continued education of current and future Kuwait Air Force personnel. The construction of this airbase will enable Kuwait to enhance the operational effectiveness of its military and promote security and stability throughout Kuwait. Kuwait will have no difficulty absorbing this additional capability into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this infrastructure and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

USACE is the principal organization that will direct and manage this program. USACE will provide services through both in-house personnel and contract services. The estimated number of U.S. Government and contractor representatives to be assigned to Kuwait to implement the provisions of this proposed sale will be determined as a result of program definitization.

There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Kuwait.

H.J. RES. 66 AND H.J. RES. 67

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, the easiest way for workers to save the additional money they need for retirement is through work-based retirement plans. When workers have access to work-based plans, the vast majority of them choose to participate, but many Americans do not work for an employer that offers such a plan. According to AARP, 55 million private-sector workers ages 18 to 64 had no ability to save for retirement through an employer-sponsored plan in 2013. Of those workers, 2.2 million lived in Pennsylvania.

In response, numerous States and multiple cities have considered programs that would give residents better access to retirement savings accounts, and multiple States have already passed laws putting such programs in place: Our Republican colleagues are trying to nullify efforts by these States and cities, rolling back their efforts to give their citizens better access to retirement savings accounts.

It is both surprising and disappointing to see this opposition mounted against a measure we should all be able to support—enhancing access to retirement savings. In undermining these programs, Republicans will be denying access to safe, low-cost retirement savings vehicles.

A recent study looking at just the city of Philadelphia found that roughly half of Philadelphia workers between the ages of 25 and 64 did not have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan at work. Further, 20 percent of Philadelphians over the age of 65 are poor, compared to 9 percent nationwide; 30 percent of Philadelphians over the age of 65 have incomes between 100 and 200 percent of poverty.

One of the most important elements of economic security for the middle class is retirement security. Millions of Americans ask, “Will I have enough money saved to retire and retire com-

fortably?” The answer to that question for too many Pennsylvanians is no. Looking at these facts, Philadelphia took action and began exploring ways to expand access to saving for our workers. Through these resolutions, Republicans will severely undermine the efforts of cities and States to expand access to retirement savings vehicles to the citizens by facilitating IRA retirement savings through private employers.

The programs States and cities are pursuing are simple, low-cost, and voluntary. Most would simply require that employers that do not currently offer a plan facilitate voluntary employee contributions to an Individual Retirement Account. Our State and local governments are our idea incubators. Many of our States and cities, including Philadelphia, want to make it easier for workers to save for retirement. In repealing this guidance, Republicans are hindering that effort.

COMBATING GLOBAL CORRUPTION ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this week, I introduced, along with Senators PERDUE, FEINSTEIN, RUBIO, BLUMENTHAL, COLLINS, MERKLEY, BOOKER, and LEAHY, the Combating Global Corruption Act of 2017.

Global corruption is a fundamental obstacle to peace, prosperity, and human rights. It is fueling transnational criminal networks and violent extremism, and combatting it should be elevated and prioritized across our foreign policy efforts.

I know my colleagues understand the crucial importance of addressing corruption because it undermines public confidence in government institutions and fosters resentment and instability. There is growing recognition across the United States and around the world that corruption is a serious threat to international security and stability. The countries and names might be different, but the characteristics and the impact on innocent people are the same.

The bribery scandal surrounding the huge Brazilian construction firm Odebrecht has tarnished politicians and governments from Peru to Colombia to Mexico. Rampant corruption in oil-rich Angola is depriving children of a quality education and contributing to the highest child mortality rate in the world. While progress is now being made, extensive corruption in Afghanistan resulted in billions of dollars of assistance winding up in the pockets of crooked elites.

The connections are clear: Where there are high levels of corruption, we find fragile states, political instability, and people suffering from hunger and violence.

Corruption is a global problem, but its consequences take the harshest toll at the local level, and it is very tough to fight. The problem of corruption, and the disruption and suffering it

causes, involves many corrupt actors, from government officials to businessmen, from law enforcement and military personnel to street gangs. Corruption is a system that operates via extensive, entrenched networks in both the public and private sectors.

We know that corruption is the lifeblood of Vladimir Putin’s Russia, and it is the glue for his regime’s survival. Parasitic at home, deeply corrupt regimes like Putin’s seek to enrich themselves, hollow out their own countries’ institutions, and subvert rules-based democratic states abroad. An anticorruption platform run by opposition activist and aspiring, Presidential candidate Alexei Navalny recently released information uncovering four mansions, an Italian vineyard, yachts, and other high-value assets reportedly held by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. Anticorruption demonstrations, in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and across the country in recent weeks reflect the ongoing resistance of the Russian people to government corruption. Hundreds were arrested. Prominent anticorruption activist Ildar Dadin, who has already spent over a year in prison for earlier protests, was among those arrested.

Corruption feeds the destructive fire of criminal networks and transnational crime. Citizens lose faith in the social compact between governments and the people. In Venezuela, we have seen how rampant corruption has collapsed the country’s economy, sparked a humanitarian crisis, and produced chains of money laundering that span several continents. The ongoing crisis there now threatens to collapse the last few remnants of the rule of law.

Corruption also fuels violence by security forces. South Sudan’s kleptocrats have either failed to pay or delayed salary payments to their soldiers who have in turn taken out their rage on innocent civilians, attacking them, looting and burning their homes, and engaging in other violent criminality.

We should take heart that in just the past 2 years, popular protests against corruption have broken out in Iraq, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon, Malaysia, Moldova, and Venezuela. In Romania, efforts to weaken anticorruption laws there prompted an estimated 500,000 protesters to take to the streets last month, even after the government repealed its decree, showing the degree to which citizens are fed up with graft and determined to push back. These were the largest demonstrations since the fall of communism.

Some victims express their frustration through peaceful protest, but not all. The revolutions of the Arab Spring and Ukraine began, in part, as determined anticorruption protests.

In every country where protests erupted in 2011, demonstrators condemned the corruption of detested ruling elites and demanded accountability and the return of looted assets. These