

the school year that begins next fall, where we will be back to year-round Pell. What does that mean? What is year-round Pell as opposed to what we have now? Right now, we have two semesters where you can qualify for the Pell grant. A Pell grant is given based on income and need. If you qualify for a full Pell—I believe, in the Acting President pro tempore's State and, I know, in my State—there is no community college where full Pell doesn't pay for all tuition, all books, all fees. If you are at the level of need where you qualify for the full Pell grant, you have other things you have to worry about to sustain yourself, but paying for school is not one of them. As an adult going back to school and someone paying for your own school with your own effort, if you are the first person in your family to hope to graduate from school, anything that disrupts whatever pattern you are in minimizes the chances to achieve your goal. So if you have things working in the fall and the spring and you can also stay in a summer term, not only do you get done quicker, but you don't disrupt the pattern you found yourself in.

For 8 years now we haven't had year-round Pell. This vote we will take today allows that to happen, and it will make a big difference. It will also make a difference when you are in a program where you are being prepared to do a job that is uniquely available or available in your community. It is pretty hard to explain why we can do this and we have ways to pay for it through the fall and spring, but by the summer we just have to take a break. That is not a very easy thing to explain to an employer who has come to the community because you have that training potential in your community.

The third major allocation of money that had to come from somewhere else is opioid abuse. This bill will increase by 430 percent our commitment on this issue. It is not because we had 650 million new dollars to spend on opioid abuse. It is because in many places in our country today and in many States in our country, more people die from opioid overdoses than die from car accidents. It is because many families are destroyed by addiction to prescription drugs that leads to other drugs when those prescription drugs can't be available and, frankly, the abuse of prescription drugs, in some cases, where they are available. So we are looking at new ways to deal with pain and looking at new ways to deal with this growing problem.

In 2014 and 2015, each year more than 1,000 people in Missouri died of drug overdoses. In my State and most States, a fire department that also has a first responders unit is three times more likely to respond to a drug overdose than the average fire department to a fire. So there is a third area where this bill prioritizes what needs to be done.

In the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, title I, charter schools,

all those things have a new focus as this bill passes. The mental health initiatives, rural healthcare, and Head Start are all benefited by a reprioritization of what happens here, as are veterans workforce issues and Job Corps issues.

I think this bill is far from perfect, but it is better than the way we are spending our money today and better than we were spending our money a year and a half ago. Hopefully, it will not be quite as good as the way we spend our money starting October 1.

So we need to get this work done and get started immediately doing the business of setting priorities, making difficult choices, and spending people's money in a way that has a long-term plan to benefit them, their families, and our growing economy. I look forward to that vote later today, and then to have, I would hope—as I know the majority leader hopes—a greater effort this year than ever before to get these bills on the floor and to have them fully debated. The best possible thing would be to pass them one at a time and put them on the President's desk one at a time. But the next best thing is to look at the bills and reach individual conclusions about these individual bills. That is what the bill before us today does, and I urge its passage.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### U.S. WANTS TO COMPETE FOR A WORLD EXPO ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 48, H.R. 534.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 534) to require the Secretary of State to take such actions as may be necessary for the United States to rejoin the Bureau of International Expositions, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

##### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

*This Act may be cited as the "U.S. Wants to Compete for a World Expo Act".*

##### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

*Congress finds the following:*

(1) The Bureau of International Expositions (BIE) is the organization responsible for governing World Fairs and International Expositions.

(2) Section 1(a) of Public Law 91-269 (22 U.S.C. 2801(a)) found that "international expositions . . . have a significant impact on the economic growth of the region surrounding the exposition and . . . are important instruments of national policy".

(3) The United States has not been an active member of the BIE since 2001.

(4) State and local governments and private entities in the United States have continued to participate in international expositions held in foreign countries as a means of promoting United States exports and creating jobs, but face significantly higher costs for such participation because the United States is not an active member.

(5) State and local governments and private entities in the United States have expressed interest in an international exposition being hosted in the United States, but the bid of a United States city, region, or State to host an international exposition is unlikely to be successful if the United States is not a member of the BIE.

##### SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

*It is the sense of Congress that—*

(1) the United States should rejoin the BIE immediately to promote domestic job creation, global branding, and tourism to the United States; and

(2) the Secretary of State, in partnership with the Secretary of Commerce, State and local governments, and private and non-profit entities, should take all necessary steps to facilitate the timely submission of a request to rejoin the BIE.

##### SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State is authorized to take such actions as the Secretary determines necessary for the United States to rejoin and maintain membership in the BIE.

(b) AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS.—In addition to funds otherwise available to the Secretary to carry out this section, the Secretary is authorized to accept contributions for such purpose.

(c) NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary of State shall notify the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Foreign Relations and Appropriations of the Senate upon taking any action under subsection (a).

##### SEC. 5. CONTINUATION OF PROHIBITION ON USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR WORLD'S FAIR PAVILIONS AND EXHIBITS.

(a) CONTINUATION OF PROHIBITION.—Nothing in this Act may be construed to authorize any obligation or expenditure prohibited by section 204 of the Admiral James W. Nance and Meg Donovan Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001 (22 U.S.C. 2452b) (relating to limitations on the obligation or expenditure of funds by the Department of State for a United States pavilion or exhibit at an international exposition or world's fair registered by the BIE).

(b) PROHIBITION ON SOLICITATION OF FUNDS.—Section 204(b)(1)(C) of the Admiral James W. Nance and Meg Donovan Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001 (22 U.S.C. 2452b(b)(1)(C)) is amended by inserting after "expositions" the following: ", except that no employees of the Department of State may, in their official capacity, solicit funds to pay expenses for a United States pavilion or other major exhibit at any international exposition or world's fair registered by the Bureau of International Expositions".

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was 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 bill (H.R. 534), as amended, was passed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague from Minnesota for working with us on this piece of legislation. People sometimes say nothing ever gets done around here on a bipartisan basis, and this proves that is wrong. While that isn't one of the biggest pieces of legislation to come down the pike, it is important because of the importance of the State Department's rejoining the Bureau of International Expositions in order to preserve the possibility, in my case, for Houston's world fair bid to be considered. I know the Senator from Minnesota has a similar interest in her State. So it was a pleasure to work with her on it, and I am happy we are able to see this accomplished today.

#### HIRE VETS ACT—Continued

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, if I may speak on the bill before the Senate, yesterday the House of Representatives passed the Omnibus appropriations bill. Of course, this is the legislation that keeps the Congress and the government up and running through the end of the fiscal year, the end of September. It actually represents the first demonstration of Republicans and Democrats in both Houses of Congress working with the White House in order to pass an important piece of legislation and keep the government up and running through the end of the fiscal year.

Over the last few weeks, we have had many productive conversations and debates about how best to establish our priorities, how much we should spend—particularly my concern about underfunding our military and our national security funding but also to update our priorities because that is one of the things that happens in an appropriations bill. When programs are obsolete or ineffective, there is no way to eliminate them while operating under a continuing resolution. It takes a positive piece of legislation like an appropriations bill—like this appropriations bill—to eliminate those obsolete or no longer effective programs.

I am hopeful that once we pass this bill and after the President signs it, we will continue to plot a course toward a long-term strategic budget that reflects the priorities of the American people. I firmly believe we were elected to govern, not to shut down the government. In my view, that is an abdication of our responsibilities. I hope we will continue to follow on now after we

have been able to accomplish this bipartisan, bicameral negotiation with the White House, and we will continue to govern and to demonstrate our sense of responsibility to the American people for doing just that.

This omnibus package includes a good blueprint for how we can order our priorities and take care of our country.

Yesterday I mentioned the increases in resources to better shore up border security. This is the largest increase in border security funding in 10 years. That is a significant accomplishment. This funding will help the Department of Homeland Security hire more Border Patrol agents and Customs officials to improve the infrastructure at our ports of entry and checkpoints and hire more immigration judges to process more immigration cases.

It also creates funding for our troops fighting abroad and for our military in general and includes a pay raise for our men and women in the military, which is very important as well, particularly in an All-Volunteer military and one that has been stressed by 15 years of continuous conflict around the world.

This bill also takes a more strategic look at the threats we are facing, including resources to shore up technology and equipment that will help our military stay No. 1. After years of putting military improvements and readiness on the back burner, actually cutting defense spending by 20 percent during the two terms of President Obama, this bill is a solid first step toward regaining our readiness and maintaining a capable and modern military.

While I never will doubt the American people responding or our military responding to the needs or the threats to our security, we don't want to be roused out of our complacency by a crisis occurring somewhere in the world, whether it is North Korea, Syria, Ukraine, Crimea, or elsewhere. We want to be ready on day one. Some of that readiness has seriously been called into question by some of our lack of prioritizing defense spending and military readiness generally.

In addition to those two important topics, many across the country have been impacted by severe weather, including violent storms and tornadoes. Of course, Texas has been a part of that sad story. Several in Texas have lost their lives due to these storms and the flooding caused by them. Of course we mourn for those who have lost loved ones and those who have been injured, but we have to do more than just grieve for them—we have to help them as well. This omnibus bill includes funding for previously approved disaster relief, which will help communities in Texas and throughout the country rebuild and recover following a natural disaster.

This legislation also includes money to help reduce the rape kit backlog. This is a topic which most people are not all that familiar with, but years ago we passed something called the

Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Reduction Act, named for a heroic woman, Debbie Smith, who championed the use of forensic evidence and the tracing of DNA samples in order to solve sexual assault cases.

The amazing thing about this great technology and DNA testing is that it is enormously powerful. Even as long as 20 years later, we have had rape kits taken out of evidence lockers at law enforcement agencies and tested and come up with a hit on the FBI's database, which is the purpose of the testing. It also has the power to exonerate people who are perhaps falsely accused by excluding them scientifically from the possibility of being the assailant in a given case.

It is very important for us to fund important programs like the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Reduction Act. I know at one point there was an estimate that there were 400,000 untested rape kits in America. The problem was that we didn't really know how many there were because some of them were sitting, as I indicated earlier, in police evidence lockers, and others were sitting in the laboratory and not tested.

The question arose, when the identity of the assailant was known, what purpose could be served by testing the rape kit, which is not inexpensive? What we found is that the assailant, even if identified in the present case, is very likely to have been engaged in a course of conduct or serial assaults, and it helps us solve not only the present case but also other cases as well. Some of them are very old. That is important so that criminals can be brought to justice.

This bill also funds the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA. It funds a Federal study for a Gulf Coast protection project and active-shooter training for first responders—all priorities important to my home State of Texas.

This legislation also represents changes in Washington since November. It is the first major piece of bipartisan legislation negotiated with the new Trump administration. Instead of pushing more regulations and rules that cripple our economy and disregarding the needs of our military and the stark realities of the border, this legislation begins to steer our country in a better direction.

I know that no piece of legislation is perfect, and perhaps the best definition of a negotiation is that both sides are dissatisfied because nobody gets everything they want. I look forward to voting for this legislation because I believe we were elected last November 8 to govern, not to abdicate those responsibilities or somehow engage in a shutdown narrative, which I don't think serves anyone well, certainly not the American people. I look forward to voting on this legislation and encourage all of our colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.