

COMMITTEE COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION

The Committee Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SR-253 to conduct a hearing entitled "The Commercial Satellite Industry: What's Up and What's on the Horizon."

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC  
WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Michael Dourson, of Ohio, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances, and William L. Wehrum, of Delaware, Matthew Z. Leopold, of Florida, and David Ross, of Wisconsin, each to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, Paul Trombino III, of Wisconsin, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, and Jeffery Martin Baran, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC  
WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 to conduct a hearing entitled "The Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Act of 2017."

## COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled "Nigeria Security Update."

## COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-628 to conduct a hearing on: S.1223, Klamath Tribe Judgment Fund Repeal Act.

## COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-628 to conduct a hearing on: S.1870, Securing urgent resources vital to Indian Empowerment Act 2017; S.1953, Reauthorization of the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010; and S.1942, to direct the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to address missing and murdered Indians.

## COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, off the Senate floor to conduct a hearing on nominations.

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session

of the Senate on Wednesday, October 25, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-562 to conduct a hearing entitled "Working and Aging with Disabilities: From School to Retirement."

## PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern, Sarah Finley, be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Radhika Gharpure, who is currently serving as a legislative fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

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

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges be granted to Tessa Rebholz, a fellow on my staff, for the remainder of the session.

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

## APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On Tuesday, October 24, 2017, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 96-388, as amended by Public Law 97-84, and Public Law 106-292, reappointed and appointed the following Senators to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council: the Honorable ORRIN G. HATCH of Utah, The Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida, and The Honorable TIM SCOTT of South Carolina.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-  
OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF  
2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1329 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title. The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1329) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2017, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 1329) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 280 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 280) designating the week of October 2 through October 6, 2017, as "National Health Information Technology Week" to recognize the value of health information technology in transforming and improving the healthcare system for all people in the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 280) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of October 3, 2017, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

## RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 305, S. Res. 306, and S. Res. 307.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

## ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, at 12 noon on Thursday, October 26, all postcloture time be considered expired on the Palk nomination, and that following disposition of the Palk nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate

vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the McFadden nomination.

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

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, October 26; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Palk nomination under the previous order.

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

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator DURBIN and Senator WYDEN.

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

The Senator from Illinois.

#### ROHINGYA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Rohingya are one of many ethnic groups, largely Muslim, who have been living for centuries in Burma and now in Myanmar, with the majority of them in the western coastal Rakhine State.

Deep-seated misconceptions about their roots and faith have led to decades of discrimination, about which many of us are aware because of press reports. They have been denied citizenship, had their movement restricted, and have been deprived of basic healthcare. It is no wonder that the Rohingya people are considered to be one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.

Today, as a result of a military crackdown against them in the Rakhine State—an overzealous, disproportionate response to attacks on security outposts by some militants last October and then again this August—countless Rohingya have been brutally killed, and more than 600,000 have fled to overwhelmed and desperate camps in neighboring Bangladesh.

The scorched-earth tactic by the Burmese military has left hundreds of villages literally burned to the ground, and the reports of rape, starvation, mass killing—even reports of security forces burning people, babies, alive—have been horrifying. Satellite images and maps indicate that the destruction

by the Burmese military is not episodic, it is systematic.

In Bangladesh, aid groups have been unable to keep up with the influx of refugees. The unprecedented scale of the crisis and the lack of infrastructure in the makeshift camps have created significant gaps in access to food, medical care, and even safety and shelter.

The international community has condemned the violence against the Rohingya, and rightly so.

Countries around the world—reputable international human rights organizations such as the Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and even the U.N.—have denounced the military's campaign against the Rohingya.

In a speech to the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva last month, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, called the Burmese military operation against the Rohingya people "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing."

Many of my colleagues in this Chamber joined me when I introduced S. Res. 250 to condemn these atrocities, and a large group of us also wrote to the administration recently to urge Secretary Tillerson and Administrator Green to help resolve the crisis and provide critically needed aid.

Just yesterday, in a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, my friend and colleague, Senator BEN CARDIN of Maryland, labeled the crisis a "genocide." Yet Aung San Suu Kyi, the de facto leader of Burma, the Nobel laureate, has largely done and said too little.

I have followed Aung San Suu Kyi over the years. I joined many of my colleagues in praising her struggle for democracy. After 15 years under house arrest, she and the National League for Democracy won a landslide victory in the first national vote since Burma's transition to civilian rule in 2015, more than two decades after her party was denied its victory in the 1990 election.

I admired her so much for her non-violent struggle for political freedom and human rights. And while I recognize she still has a fragile relationship with the Burmese military, which still has considerable power, I am sadly disappointed in her lack of leadership when it comes to the plight of the Rohingya people—her fellow countrymen—men and women who are in a desperate situation.

She claims she is committed to restoring peace and the rule of law. Yet she has spoken of so-called allegations and counter-allegations instead of addressing the widespread, well-documented abuses by her own country's security forces.

I was glad that Aung San Suu Kyi in 2016 appointed investigators, led by former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, who recommended this summer that Burma review a 1982 law that strips most Rohingya of citizenship. Yet the Burmese Government has yet

to implement any of the Commission's recommendations and further continues to deny access to the Rakhine State to other U.N. investigators, journalists, and NGO groups. Some officials have even accused the Rohingya of faking rape and faking the burning of their own homes. What a preposterous claim.

I recognize the dramatic progress Burma has made over the years. It will take a long time to overcome many of the challenges in such a young democracy, and I understand that Aung San Suu Kyi, as State Counselor, has a limited role under the power-sharing agreement with her military, which has largely been responsible for the violence I have described. But I would urge her to live up to her own words upon delivering her Nobel Peace Prize lecture in 2012 to address the historic and brutal suppression of the Rohingya and support ethnic reconciliation in Burma. In fact, Aung San Suu Kyi quoted the following passages from the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1948, as the answer to why she fought for democracy and human rights in her home country in Burma. She said:

[D]isregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.

[I]t is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law.

These are wise words used by Aung San Suu Kyi when she received her Nobel Prize. They are words that apply today to this crisis within her own country.

I am committed to doing what I can in Congress to hold those in the Burmese military personally accountable for the reprehensible human rights violations against the Rohingya.

I want to note that I have also had the opportunity over the October recess to meet with some members of the Rohingya community who have resettled in my home State of Illinois over the years.

About 1,500 Rohingya people live in the Chicagoland area. Among them is Nasir Zakaria. He helped found the Rohingya Culture Center in Chicago—the first Rohingya community center in America. The center helps provide a safe, familiar space for Rohingya people new to the country, as well as critically needed resources, such as translators, ESL and computer classes, help with paperwork, and much more.

When I met Nasir and the other members of the community about a week ago with my wife, they told me about the phone calls and photos they receive late at night from family and friends fleeing the violence, looking for safety in Bangladesh.