

- (2) veterans cemeteries; and
- (3) other locations;

Whereas the Wreaths Across America project carries out a week-long veterans parade from Maine to Virginia, stopping along the way to spread a message about the importance of—

(1) remembering the fallen heroes of the United States;

(2) honoring those who serve; and

(3) reminding the people of the United States about the sacrifices made by veterans and the families of veterans to preserve freedoms in the United States;

Whereas, in 2016, approximately 1,200,000 remembrance wreaths were sent to more than 1,220 locations across the United States and overseas, which is an increase of more than 100 locations compared to the previous year;

Whereas, in December 2017, the tradition of escorting tractor-trailers filled with donated wreaths from Harrington, Maine, to Arlington National Cemetery will be continued by—

(1) the Patriot Guard Riders; and

(2) other patriotic escort units, including—

(A) motorcycle units;

(B) law enforcement units; and

(C) first responder units;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of individuals volunteer each December to help lay remembrance wreaths;

Whereas, in 2017, the trucking industry in the United States continues to support the Wreaths Across America project by providing drivers, equipment, and related services to assist in the transportation of wreaths to more than 1,300 locations across the United States;

Whereas the Senate designated December 17, 2016, as “Wreaths Across America Day”; and

Whereas, on December 16, 2017, the Wreaths Across America project will continue the proud legacy of bringing remembrance wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates December 16, 2017, as “Wreaths Across America Day”;

(2) honors—

(A) the Wreaths Across America project;

(B) patriotic escort units, including—

(i) motorcycle units;

(ii) law enforcement units; and

(iii) first responder units;

(C) the trucking industry in the United States; and

(D) the volunteers and donors involved in this worthy tradition; and

(3) recognizes—

(A) the service of veterans and members of the Armed Forces; and

(B) the sacrifices that veterans and members of the Armed Forces have made, and continue to make, for the United States, a great nation.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined by my colleague Senator ANGUS KING in sponsoring this resolution to designate December 16, 2017, as Wreaths Across America Day. Since its inception, the Wreaths Across America project has become an annual tradition of donating, transporting, and placing Maine balsam fir remembrance wreaths on the graves of our fallen heroes buried at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at veterans cemeteries and memorials in every State and overseas. In the program’s 26 years, more than 4.5 million wreaths have been placed in honor of those who have served our country.

The origin of Wreaths Across America is an inspiring example of that generosity and gratitude. During the Christmas season in 1992, Morrill and Karen Worcester took time during their busiest season to donate and deliver wreaths from their company in Harrington, ME, to Arlington National Cemetery to honor the heroes who lie at rest there. At first, a small group of volunteers laid the wreaths with little notice. In recent years, however, the Arlington Wreath Project has grown to become a national phenomenon. The people of Maine are proud that this important and well-deserved tradition began in our State.

This year, on December 16, thousands of volunteers in Arlington, throughout our Nation, and overseas will carry out the mission of Wreaths Across America to “Remember, Honor, Teach.” This will conclude a weeklong procession between Maine and Virginia, with stops along the way to pause and remember the men and women who have died to preserve our freedoms, spread the message about the importance of honoring those who serve, and remind the people of the United States about the sacrifices made by our veterans and their families. This procession helps to ensure that those sacrifices are never forgotten.

The Patriot Guard Riders, along with other dedicated escort groups, will accompany tractor-trailers filled with donated wreaths from Maine to Arlington National Cemetery. America’s trucking industry has long supported Wreaths Across America by providing drivers, equipment, fuel, and related services to assist in the transportation of wreaths across the country to more than 1,200 locations.

Wreaths Across America not only honors our departed heroes but also imparts the important message to veterans who are still with us that we honor their service. It tells our men and women in uniform today that we are grateful for their courage and devotion to duty. It tells the families of those serving our country that they are in our thoughts and prayers. And it tells the families of the fallen that we share their grief.

Throughout human history, the evergreen wreath has been offered as a tribute to heroes. On December 16, 2017, we will again offer this enduring symbol of valor and sacrifice as part of our never-ending obligation to thank those who wore the uniform of our country. In this season of giving, we will pay tribute to those who have given us the most precious gift of all—our freedom.

SENATE RESOLUTION 354—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE COURAGEOUS WORK AND LIFE OF ARGENTINIAN PROSECUTOR ALBERTO NISMAN, AND CALLING FOR A SWIFT AND TRANS-PARENT INVESTIGATION INTO HIS TRAGIC DEATH IN BUENOS AIRES ON JANUARY 18, 2015

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

S. RES. 354

Whereas the bombing of the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on July 18, 1994, killed 85 people and wounded more than 300;

Whereas the investigation of the AMIA bombing had been marked by grave judicial misconduct, and the case had reached an impasse in 2004;

Whereas, in September 2004, Alberto Nisman was appointed as the Special Prosecutor in charge of the 1994 AMIA bombing investigation;

Whereas, on October 25, 2006, Argentine prosecutors Alberto Nisman and Marcelo Martinez Burgos formally accused the Government of Iran of directing the bombing, and the Hezbollah militia of carrying it out;

Whereas Ibrahim Hussain Berro, a member of the terrorist group Hezbollah, was identified as the AMIA bomber;

Whereas Iranian nationals Ali Fallahian (former Iranian intelligence minister), Mohsen Rabbani (former Iranian cultural attaché), Ahmad Reza Asghari (former Iranian diplomat), Ahmad Vahidi (former Iranian defense minister), Ali Akbar Velayati (former Iranian foreign minister), Mohsen Rezaee (former chief commander of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps), and Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (former President of Iran) were named as suspects in the bombing;

Whereas Lebanese national Imad Fayeze Moughnieh (former head of Hezbollah’s external security) was named as a suspect in the bombing;

Whereas, in November 2007, Interpol voted to put these 5 Iranian and 1 Lebanese suspects in the 1994 AMIA attack on its most wanted list, and reportedly has extended these red notices in July, 2017;

Whereas, in 2007, Guyanese national Abdul Kadir plotted to blow up John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York and was, according to Mr. Nisman, “the most important Iranian agent” in Guyana and influenced by Mohsen Rabbani;

Whereas, in May 2013, prosecutor Alberto Nisman published a 500-page indictment accusing Iran of establishing terrorist networks throughout Latin America, including in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname, dating back to the 1980s;

Whereas, according to the Department of State’s 2016 Report on Terrorism, Hezbollah, Iran’s proxy terrorist organization, continues to maintain an active presence in the Western Hemisphere as well as “some financial supporters, facilitators and sympathizers”;

Whereas, in January 2013, the Government of Argentina under then-President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner agreed with Iran in a Memorandum of Understanding to set up a so-called “truth commission” to investigate who was “really” responsible for the bombing, despite the fact that Iran and its proxy

actors were and remain the only suspects in the attack;

Whereas, in May 2014, an Argentine court found this Memorandum of Understanding to be unconstitutional;

Whereas prosecutor Alberto Nisman was invited to testify before the United States Congress in February 2013, but was prevented from doing so by the Government of Argentina, who denied him permission to travel to Washington, DC;

Whereas the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation provided technical assistance and cooperated with Argentina law enforcement officials in the AMIA bombing investigation;

Whereas, on January 13, 2015, prosecutor Alberto Nisman alleged in a complaint that then-Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and then-Minister of Foreign Relations Hector Timerman conspired to cover up Iranian involvement in the 1994 terrorist bombing, and reportedly agreed to negotiate immunity for Iranian suspects and help get their names removed from the Interpol list;

Whereas prosecutor Alberto Nisman claimed that he had evidence of a "sophisticated criminal plan," reportedly including wire-taps and phone calls "between people close to Mrs. Kirchner" and a number of Iranians, including Mohsen Rabbani, showing a planned exchange of Iranian oil for purchasing rights to Argentine grain to revive Argentina's economy;

Whereas prosecutor Alberto Nisman was scheduled to present his new findings to the Argentinian Congress on January 19, 2015;

Whereas prosecutor Alberto Nisman was found shot in the head in his apartment in Buenos Aires on January 18, 2015;

Whereas officials of the Government of Argentina under then-Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner continued to discredit Mr. Nisman after his suspicious death, attempting to ruin his reputation;

Whereas then-Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner created unfounded hypotheses with regard to Mr. Nisman's findings, including conspiracies she suggested were orchestrated by United States hedge funds and other entities she considers "hostile" to the President of Argentina;

Whereas, in May 2015, an Argentine Federal court had dismissed Nisman's findings against Ms. Kirchner and other officials and later the accusations were dropped by Javier De Luca, another Federal prosecutor;

Whereas that move raised questions in Argentina about the objectivity of Mr. De Luca, given his closeness to a group of Ms. Kirchner's supporters;

Whereas an independent investigation launched by Alberto Nisman's family released its own report by forensic experts and forensic pathologists showing that Mr. Nisman's death was not an accident or suicide, including claims that "the prosecutor had been shot in the back of the head", that "no gun powder residue was found on his hands", and that "Mr. Nisman's body had been moved to the bathroom once he was shot";

Whereas, in September 2016, Argentine President Mauricio Macri stated that "it's hard to believe that Nisman committed suicide. There are too many situations, indications, realities of those hours, those days, that don't match with a suicide.";

Whereas, in September 2016, Argentine President Mauricio Macri called for "a definitive investigation" into the death of Alberto Nisman, saying: "I want to generate the conditions, which I think I'm doing, to allow our justice system to freely investigate what really happened.";

Whereas, on September 22, 2017, forensic investigators of the Argentine Federal Police

submitted a report to a Federal court concluding that slain prosecutor Alberto Nisman did not commit suicide, but rather was drugged, beaten, and fatally shot in the head on January 18, 2015;

Whereas, on December 7, 2017, former Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner was charged with treason for attempting to cover up Iran's role in the 1994 AMIA bombing; and

Whereas no one yet has been brought to justice for the death of Alberto Nisman, nor have any of the named Iranian suspects for the AMIA bombing faced prosecution: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) offers its sincerest condolences to the family of Argentinian prosecutor Alberto Nisman;

(2) recognizes Alberto Nisman's courageous work in dedicating his life to the investigation of the bombing of the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which killed 85 people and wounded more than 300;

(3) applauds Argentine President Mauricio Macri for calling for a swift, transparent, and independent investigation into Alberto Nisman's tragic death;

(4) recognizes the arduous and technical work of the Argentine National Gendarmerie in reviewing evidence to produce credible, evidence-based findings;

(5) encourages the public release of the results of the investigation, including the forensic and pathological reports by the government, which would show whether Alberto Nisman took his own life, or if his death is a homicide;

(6) commends the Government of Argentina for exemplifying the rule of law and the importance of an independent justice system;

(7) urges the President of the United States to directly offer United States technical assistance to the Government of Argentina in solving the death of Alberto Nisman, as well as the ongoing investigation of the AMIA bombing;

(8) expresses serious concern about Iran's terrorist networks in Argentina and all of the Western Hemisphere, mindful of the findings of Mr. Nisman's investigation and reports on this matter, and encourages continued investigations of Iranian terrorist networks based on his work;

(9) urges an independent investigation into the findings of Mr. Nisman regarding the events that led to the memorandum signed between Argentina and Iran;

(10) likewise expresses serious concerns about attempts by former Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and her government to discredit Mr. Nisman and raise unfounded hypotheses on Mr. Nisman's AMIA findings and the circumstances of Mr. Nisman's death while the work of the courts on this matter still continues; and

(11) urges the President of the United States to continue to monitor Iran's activities in Latin America and the Caribbean as it is mandated by the Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-220).

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 355—IMPROVING PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF NOMINATIONS IN THE SENATE

Mr. LANKFORD submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 355

*Resolved*,

#### SECTION 1. CONSIDERATION OF NOMINATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) POST-CLOTURE CONSIDERATION.—If cloture is invoked in accordance with rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate on a nomination described in paragraph (2), there shall be no more than 8 hours of post-cloture consideration equally divided in the usual form.

(2) NOMINATIONS COVERED.—A nomination described in this paragraph is any nomination except for the nomination of an individual—

(A) to a position at level I of the Executive Schedule under section 5312 of title 5, United States Code; or

(B) to serve as a judge or justice appointed to hold office during good behavior.

(b) SPECIAL RULE FOR DISTRICT COURT NOMINEES.—If cloture is invoked in accordance with rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate on a nomination of an individual to serve as a judge of a district court of the United States, there shall be no more than 2 hours of post-cloture consideration equally divided in the usual form.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I have 8 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 ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

##### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 2 p.m. in SD-215 to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security.

##### COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSION

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pension is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room SD-430 to conduct a hearing entitled "Implementation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act: Progress and the Path Forward for Medical Innovation".

##### COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

The Committee on Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room SD-226 to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Leonard Steven Grasz, of Nebraska, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit, James C. Ho, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, Don R. Willett, of Texas, to be a Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, Terry A. Doughty, to be