

WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2458, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms and explosives and Federal firearms and explosives licenses and permits to known or suspected terrorists.

S. 2478

At the request of Mrs. McCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2478, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny the deduction for advertising and promotional expenses for prescription drugs.

S. RES. 377

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 377, a resolution recognizing the importance of paying tribute to those individuals who have faithfully served and retired from the Armed Forces of the United States, designating April 18, 2018, as "Military Retiree Appreciation Day", and encouraging the people of the United States to honor the past and continued service of military retirees to their local communities and the United States.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BROWN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. UDALL, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. JONES, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KING, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. SMITH, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2495. A bill to reauthorize the grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, 1 week ago today I stood here and urged my colleagues on both the left and the right to lay aside their differences and work together to prevent future tragedies like that in Parkland, FL.

It has been nearly 3 weeks since the murder of 17 students and staff at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. While time will continue to march on, our resolve to do something about school violence must grow only stronger.

Over the past 3 weeks my colleagues have put forth a number of legislative proposals. Some are recycled versions of earlier proposals, while others propose creative new ideas. Some enjoy broad bipartisan support, while others have not been widely embraced. We have seen much discussion and debate but little legislative progress. To break the impasse, we must unite on the issues where we agree.

Let today be the day that we come together to take a meaningful step to-

ward legislation that has the potential to prevent school gun violence, save lives, and restore the sense of peace and security that all children should enjoy when they walk through the doors of their respective schools.

Today I come together with my partners on both sides of the aisle to introduce the Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Act, or STOP School Violence Act. As I outlined on the Senate floor last week, the bill will make Department of Justice grants available to fund four initiatives. Last week I outlined those four initiatives, and today I would like to describe them in even greater detail.

First, the bill will provide grants to be used for evidence-based training to prevent student violence against others and self, including training for local law enforcement officers, school personnel, and students.

One kind of training this bill would fund could prevent many incidents of school violence. Over the last 25 years, research has revealed that in 7 out of 10 acts of gun violence, a friend or someone else was told that an act of violence would be committed before it happened. In one study, it was reported that in four out of five school shootings, the attacker had told people of his plans ahead of time.

We must ensure that everyone in the school ecosystem is educated to recognize the signs of a potential threat and likewise—students, teachers, and administrators—take action and follow up when they see warning signs. By building a culture in which students and teachers understand the importance of reporting possible threats of violence, this bill will save lives and help keep our communities safe.

Second, the bill will fund evidence-based technology and equipment to improve school security and prevent school violence.

After the shooting at Columbine High School nearly 19 years ago, I authored legislation that made Department of Justice grant funds available for metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures. The Secure Our Schools Program, which ran from 2002 through 2011, was the only Federal school safety program that exclusively provided direct funding for the purchase and implementation of security technologies to improve school safety. The legislation I am introducing today will reauthorize and build on that program to provide funding for proven school security infrastructure improvements consistent with schools' individualized needs and industry best practices. While we certainly don't need to turn our schools into fortresses, we must do more to protect our children from harm.

Third, the bill will provide funding for the development and operation of evidence-based school threat assessment and crisis intervention teams, which may include evidence-based training for school officials in responding to mental health crises. These mul-

tidisciplinary teams—based on existing staff of school personnel, administrators, law enforcement, and mental health professionals—can implement proven, evidence-based approaches like the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines. These guidelines, which have been documented to be effective in field tests and controlled studies, provide schools with a safe, structured, and efficient way to respond to student threats of violence. Used at thousands of schools across the country, these are the types of proactive, preventive solutions that should be available for all schools.

Fourth, the bill will authorize funding for continued coordination with local law enforcement.

These four initiatives do not operate in isolation but together are a comprehensive approach to improving school security and reducing student violence. Training students and teachers to identify and report warning signs is critical to stopping acts of school violence before they happen.

As we saw in Parkland, having folks identify warning signs is not enough. There must be a process for acting on this information when it is brought to the attention of school administrators or law enforcement officials. The school threat assessment and crisis intervention teams that could be funded through this bill will ensure that schools have an effective procedure for evaluating and responding to potential threats of school violence.

Unfortunately, no amount of prevention will ever be able to stop every act of school violence before it happens. For those hopefully rare instances where we cannot intervene ahead of time, this bill ensures that funding is available to assist schools with commonsense security infrastructure improvements to harden schools and make it more difficult for attackers to succeed. Through each step of this process, local law enforcement has an important role to play in partnering with school personnel to prevent and respond to incidents of school violence.

States are already taking the lead in these areas to ensure that our schools are safe and secure. Last week I highlighted the Safe Utah smartphone app, a statewide service that provides real-time crisis intervention to youth through texting and a confidential tip program. Since the app was unveiled in 2016, 86 planned school attacks have been stopped. Utah and other States across the country are rolling out proven solutions that prevent and reduce student violence.

We must respect the leading role of the States in this space, and we must do what we can to ensure that proven, evidence-based solutions are available to protect all students nationwide. The STOP School Violence Act will complement and magnify those efforts at the State and local level. With a requirement that States and localities contribute to the cost of these programs, my bill will authorize \$75 million in fiscal year 2018 and \$100 million

each year for the following 10 years. In total, that is more than \$1 billion to secure our schools and train our students, teachers, and law enforcement.

Many of my colleagues have called for reforms and restrictions related to firearms—something this bill does not address. Those are important discussions, and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on these and other issues. In the meantime, we need to work with what we have, and what we have in the STOP School Violence Act is good, commonsense legislation that can save hundreds of lives. I will not pretend that my bill is a catch-all solution to the problem of school violence. It is not, but it is a start. Indeed, this bipartisan proposal is the catalyst to a critical conversation that will take place in the weeks and months to come.

For far too long, we have allowed politics to get in the way of real reform. For far too long, we have been holed up in our partisan foxholes, ducking the difficult issues of the day in hopes that the problem of school violence would solve itself. For far too long, we have clung to our rhetorical weapons, but now is the time to lay those weapons aside. Now is the time to reconcile our differences for the good of our Nation and for the good of our children. As I said last week, now is not the time for argument but for action.

Rather than letting the perfect be the enemy of the good, I implore my friends on both sides of the aisle to come together for the safety of our children. Rather than resorting to recycled talking points, I ask my colleagues to heed minority leader SCHUMER's call to "pass real legislation that makes a difference." I thought that was a good statement.

Mr. President, I wish to emphasize the singularity of the opportunity we have in front of us. My bill represents a respite from the anger and acrimony that far too often pervade our politics. It is a symbol of the great good we can accomplish when we come together in common cause. Already, dozens of my colleagues from both the left and the right have signed on to support this bill. The STOP Act is just the start we need to prevent violence in our schools, so let's come together to get this done, and I hope we can.

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2018

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 6; 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. I further ask that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2155 with the time until

the cloture vote equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; further, that following disposition of the Doughty nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2155; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. and that all time during recess, adjournment, morning business, leader remarks, and the Doughty confirmation vote count postcloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2155.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

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 CASEY.

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

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

#### RUSSIA INVESTIGATION BY SPECIAL COUNSEL MUELLER

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I restate my support for the investigations by Robert Mueller into Russia's election interference, as well as to condemn the partisan attacks on the independent investigation being led by Robert Mueller, who has been an honorable public servant over many decades.

In 2016, our Nation came under attack by a hostile foreign power. Everyone knows that now. Our election process—the bedrock of our system of government—was targeted by Russian agents. They used a variety of measures to pursue their goals. The intelligence community's unclassified report concluded:

We assess Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the U.S. presidential election. Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency. We further assess Putin and the Russian Government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump.

That is from the unclassified report of our intelligence community.

These brazen and illegal actions have already resulted in the indictments of 13 Russian individuals and three Russian companies as part of Special Counsel Mueller's investigation.

Russia may not have used traditional military force against us, but the actions they took present just as serious a threat to our national security. Make no mistake, when a foreign adversary targets an American election, it has targeted America, itself. Yet the President, whose own campaign is being examined as part of the Russia investigation, has refused to enforce sanctions against Russia. He has refused to fight back against Putin and his regime, despite there being clear evidence that

they attacked us. The President's failure to take action against Russia underscores the urgent need for Special Counsel Mueller's independent investigation to continue unfettered.

In this investigation, Mr. Mueller has already amassed enough evidence to have a grand jury indict Russian operatives and high-ranking members of the Trump campaign, including former Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort and deputy campaign manager Rick Gates. Other Trump advisers, like Mr. Papadopoulos and Michael Flynn, have pled guilty to Federal crimes.

Unfortunately, as this evidence has come forward, unwarranted, dangerous, and partisan attacks on Mr. Mueller's investigation and on Mr. Mueller, himself, have accelerated; yet a brief glance at Mr. Mueller's lifetime of service reflects his commitment to serving the American people with honor, integrity, and courage that, I think, is unmatched by anyone I know in Washington. Here are a couple of examples.

As a young man, Mr. Mueller served with distinction in the Vietnam war and was awarded a Bronze Star, two Navy Commendation Medals, the Purple Heart, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry for his leadership and exemplary service.

Mr. Mueller received the Bronze Star for his "heroic achievement" after leading his fellow marines through an 8-hour battle, where, under enemy fire, "Second Lieutenant Mueller fearlessly moved from one position to another, directing the accurate counterfire of his men and shouting words of encouragement to them. . . . [H]e then skillfully supervised the evacuation of casualties from the hazardous fire area." After that battle, he was promoted to first lieutenant.

Just 4 months later, he sustained a bullet wound when he responded to an ambush by enemy forces on marines who were in his command. For his heroic response, Mr. Mueller received the Navy Commendation Medal with a citation praising him for rushing to save his fellow marines while "completely disregarding his own safety."

I will give a recitation of some of the record that Special Counsel Mueller developed long before he was named to this position. I was going through his actions as a marine in combat, and I have a few more parts of his record to review.

Mr. Mueller not only fought courageously on the battlefield, but upon returning home earned his law degree. He continued serving his country throughout his legal career.

After serving in U.S. attorney's offices in both Boston and San Francisco for over a decade, he later served at the Justice Department leading the Criminal Division of the Justice Department under President George H.W. Bush. There he oversaw cases ranging from the prosecution of the Panamanian dictator, Manuel Noriega, to the Lockerbie bombing.