

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. KING. Mr. President, every morning, across America millions of people get up, get dressed, and go to work. They all have similar experiences. They are getting ready for a new day. They are getting ready for a new set of challenges. They are getting ready to serve their company and the place where they work to the best of their ability.

There is one group of Americans who get up every morning to go to work, and it is a slightly different experience because when those people report for work, they are knowingly and willingly putting their lives on the line. I am referring to our police officers and law enforcement personnel across the country.

I think it is an important distinction. All of us go to work. We all think about it. But stop and think for a moment that when someone puts on that blue uniform or green uniform, or whatever it is, to serve the public, they are taking a risk with their life. They are literally laying their lives on the line for the rest of us.

Fifty-six years ago today, President John F. Kennedy designated May 15 as a law enforcement memorial day, or Peace Officers Memorial Day, and the week in which May 15 falls is designed and set aside by our country ever since to recognize peace officers. I love that term—peace officers. They are here to protect us.

The Constitution in its preamble lays out the basic outlines of our government, and this is one of them: to “insure domestic Tranquility.” What a lovely phrase that is—to “insure domestic Tranquility.” That means, in many cases, law enforcement.

I rise today to recognize law enforcement officials across the country but, also, particularly in my State of Maine. As Governor, I spent 24 hours a day with the State Police. I learned in that job the quality of the people we have serving us, the quality of the people, who often could make more money and have more promotions in another line of work but who had chosen to serve the public and put their lives on the line.

In Washington, there is a memorial to our law enforcement personnel, to our peace officers. On that memorial there are engraved the names of those who have lost their lives in the service of their fellow citizens. Two of those names that will be added this year are from the State of Maine.

One was Chris Gardner. He was only 47 years old. He had worked with the University of Maine Police, and then he worked with the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency. He died November 15, 2016, from complications from a training exercise. He was involved in the Maine Law Enforcement Torch

Run. Many law enforcement people across the country are involved with the Torch Run, which raises money and visibility for the Special Olympics. He is survived by his parents, his brother, his sisters, his stepmother, and by many aunts and uncles. He is also survived by other loved ones. Chris Gardner served his public, served his people, and served his State and community, and he lost his life in that service.

Another loss last year that will be going onto the monument this year is Nathan Desjardins. Nathan was a member of the Fryeburg Police Department. He was only 20 years old. He had just begun his career in law enforcement as a peace officer. He died on his first day of water training, responding to an incident of a capsized canoe. The boat he was on hit an object in the river. He was thrown out. Desjardins and another emergency responder were thrown from the boat. He sustained a head injury and died on June 6, 2017.

Again, he is survived by his parents, his brother, his grandmother, and a large extended family. Both Nathan and Christopher will have their names added to the memorial this week.

They got up, they went to work, they served their public, and they served their citizens and their community. They put their lives on the line, and, in this case, they made the ultimate sacrifice.

A name that will not be added to the memorial this year—the additions are from the prior calendar year, but we had an unbelievably tragic event in Maine barely 3 weeks ago—is that of Eugene P. Cole. He was shot and killed in the line of duty on April 25, 2018. He was born in a little town called Skowhegan, ME. He was raised in that area and was the oldest of five. He graduated from high school and went into the Army. He came back to Maine, worked in a repair shop, and then, in the year 2000, he decided to pursue what was really his calling as a law enforcement officer.

In 2006, at the age of 50, he went to the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, and he became a rural patrol deputy for the Somerset County Sheriff's Office. I used to live right across the street from the Somerset County Sheriff's Office. I remember the sheriff when I was there almost 50 years ago—Francis Henderson. Francis Henderson epitomized law enforcement in Maine and then Somerset County, and his followers as sheriffs have done the same.

Gene Cole was in that mold. He was admired in his community. He was well-known in his community. He was respected. He embodied the values of law enforcement, and he was an inspiration to the officers who served with him.

He is survived by his wife Sheryl of 41 years, four children, several grandchildren, his siblings Tom and Sheryl, his mother, and a large extended family.

His funeral was in Bangor, ME, just a week and a half ago, and 3,600 people

were there. Law enforcement officers from across the Northeast and from across the country were there to pay their respects to one of their fallen comrades.

Eugene Cole was a hero. He wouldn't call himself that. He would be embarrassed to be called that. From my understanding, he was a modest and unassuming man, but he was a hero because every morning he got up to go to work. He put on his uniform, and he put his life on the line for the people of Somerset County, Skowhegan, and Norridgewock and for the people of the State of Maine.

I rise today to pay tribute to Gene Cole, to Chris Gardner, to Nathan Desjardins, and to all of the peace officers, the law enforcement officers—those across our country in our communities—who every day are willing to put their lives on the line for us. Peace Officers Memorial Day—and the week—is a fitting tribute to those brave people across the country who serve us every day and every night around the clock to “insure domestic Tranquility,” in the wonderful phrase of our Founders.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, across the country this week and as is evident in the Nation's Capital, people are honoring men and women who serve in law enforcement. If you are visiting the Capitol this week, you will see more law enforcement officers in many different uniforms than you would have expected to see, unless you are already here for law enforcement week.

When the Presiding Officer and I came to the Senate, Senator COONS from Delaware came at the same time. We started the bipartisan Senate Law Enforcement Caucus. It is a privilege for me to speak during law enforcement week as we honor those in law enforcement and to speak on behalf of Senator COONS and myself at a time when we think it is particularly important to recognize what law enforcement officers do.

I want to talk a little bit about the law enforcement officers who lost their lives this year in the line of duty. Too many law enforcement officers around the country have lost their lives or have been fatally injured in the line of duty.

Three law enforcement officers in Missouri were killed in the line of duty in the past year. The Clinton Police Department lost two of those officers—Officers Gary Lee Michael, Jr., and Christopher Ryan Morton.

Miller County Deputy Sheriff Casey Shoemate also lost his life. Deputy

Shoemate was killed last month while responding to a structure fire. He was in a fatal car accident. He served at the Miller County Sheriff's Office for 1 year. He is survived by his two children, his fiancée, and his parents and siblings.

In March, Clinton, MO, Police Officer Christopher Ryan Morton was shot and killed when he and two other officers responded to an unknown situation as the result of a 9-1-1 call. As Officer Morton and his colleagues arrived at the scene, the subject opened fire. The officers returned fire. They entered the home in an attempt to take the man into custody. The man continued firing and wounded all three of the officers. Officer Morton's colleagues survived their injuries, but Officer Morton's wounds turned out to be fatal. He served the Clinton Police Department for 3 years. Prior to joining law enforcement, he had served in the Missouri Army National Guard, and he deployed to Kosovo and Afghanistan. But it was at home in Clinton, MO, where he lost his life serving others. He is survived by his parents and his siblings.

In August of last year, another officer, Gary Michael, was shot and killed during a traffic stop. Officer Michael had stopped a vehicle for a suspected registration violation, and the driver exited the vehicle and immediately opened fire. Even though he was mortally wounded, Officer Michael was able to return fire and wound the subject, who was later apprehended. He had been with the Clinton Police Department for only 1 year. He was an Army veteran. He left behind his wife, his three children, and a grandchild.

In April, the Clinton Police Department placed a tribute to the two fallen officers in the station. The plaque quotes John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

Officers leave their homes every day likely to face more difficult situations than most of us face. The families of officers always have in the back of their minds thoughts about what is going to happen to the person they love when that person is out there defending us. When officers put on their uniforms, say goodbye to the people they love, and walk out the door, they put their lives on the line to try to keep others safe. We are forever indebted to them. We are indebted to their families. This debt becomes a responsibility for the sacrifices they make and the trauma some families face every day. When we see more police officers ambushed, when we see officers becoming targets more frequently than they used to be, this is the debt we owe to them and their families.

Every year in conjunction with National Police Week, the names of fallen officers like the three I just mentioned are added to the wall of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. There are more than 21,000 names on that wall, dating back to the first law enforcement death in 1791.

This week, Senator COONS and I will be introducing the National Law Enforcement Museum Commemorative Coin Act. That bill authorizes the Treasury Department to mint coins to commemorate the opening of the National Law Enforcement Museum located in Washington, DC. The museum is scheduled to open later this year and is dedicated to highlighting and honoring the work of law enforcement past and present. After the government is reimbursed for costs associated with producing the coin, proceeds will support the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's educational and outreach programs. I certainly hope our colleagues will join Senator COONS and me—as 15 Members already have—as we circulate the request to have a coin minted and used in that way.

Men and women of State and local law enforcement put themselves in harm's way every day to protect our communities. The Federal Government shares the responsibility of ensuring that they have the training, equipment, and support they need to do their jobs.

We benefit every day from the people who are law enforcement officers in and around this building. One of the things they do is obviously keep the people safe who work here, but they also make the U.S. Capitol the most open and accessible Capitol in the world. People come here every day and walk through this building where history has been made and where the work of democracy still goes on. It wouldn't be possible for them to do that if it weren't for the police officers who serve and protect the Capitol and the places around the Capitol where people who want to see democracy in action come.

The stress and fatigue that law enforcement officers face in the line of duty can take a heavy toll and can lead to behavioral health issues, such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress. They have the stress that wherever they are can become the frontline when working in law enforcement. I was proud that the Senate passed by unanimous consent the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act during Police Week just 1 year ago. This bill, which I cosponsored, will help law enforcement agencies better understand and address the behavioral health needs of their officers.

On that topic, too often in the last decade, we have expected police officers to generally be the frontlines of behavioral health delivery. This is not a job that is best done by police officers and emergency rooms, but too much of it is still being done that way. Police departments all over the country have turned into crisis intervention teams, where they prepare officers—in some cases, every officer in a department is prepared to be a crisis intervention officer. They must not only be a law enforcement officer but also the

on-site person who must recognize a mental health problem and deal with that issue differently than they might if it were another kind of problem.

Recently, I cosponsored the Probation Officer Protection Act, which would allow Federal probation officers to protect themselves and enhance their ability to do their job by giving them the authority to arrest third parties who are interfering with their doing their job as they try to secure a person who has violated their probation. Currently, probation officers don't have the authority to arrest a third party who forcibly interferes with the officer's performance of his or her official duties.

We recently had Jim Goehring from the Eastern District of Missouri in our office for a couple of weeks to advise us on this and other issues, to be our policy adviser on Federal probation issues. I know he and the people he works with would like to see that bill passed this year.

There are a few things we can do and are doing to honor the men and women in law enforcement and to help them better meet the real challenges of their job. They are our first responders. They run toward danger when others are able to run away. All of us in this Chamber have an obligation to honor their service not just today, not just during Police Week, but every day and every week. This is a week set aside for that, as we see officers here in Washington and at home. It is a good week to say thank you. Whether it is here or where we live, reaching out and saying thank you to those who serve us is the right thing to do.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUNT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, today, on Peace Officers Memorial Day, I would like to honor the service and sacrifice of Colt Eugene Allery, a sheriff's deputy in Rolette County, ND, who was killed in the line of duty in January of 2017.

Deputy Allery was only 29 years old, but he spent much of his young life serving in law enforcement. His loved ones said that he was happiest when he was doing for others, which is why he chose law enforcement as his career. In his life and service, Deputy Allery exemplified courage and a willingness to do whatever had to be done, regardless of the circumstances.

Deputy Allery's name was inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial earlier this week—a lasting tribute to his bravery and dedication to serving his community. His name joins 51 other North Dakota law enforcement officers who have paid the

ultimate price. We honor their legacy, along with police officers across the country who have died in the line of duty.

Here in the Senate, we are also paying tribute to our men and women in blue. I am proud to join my colleagues in sponsoring a Senate resolution that pays tribute to Deputy Allery and the 128 other law enforcement officers killed on duty in 2017. Their dedication to community and the rule of law is characteristic of so many of our policemen and policewomen, without whose efforts our communities would not be the same. In recognition of such efforts, our resolution also honors the service of all law enforcement officers by designating this week, May 13 through 19, as National Police Week.

We want to thank our men and women in blue—those who leave their homes and loved ones each day to protect our communities and heed the call to serve. While we pay special tribute to their service during National Police Week, we are always grateful for their sacrifices on our behalf. We honor them and thank them for heeding the call to serve.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am honored to join with my colleagues in honoring the men and women of law enforcement during National Police Week.

This year, it was our colleague Mr. BLUNT, the Senator from Missouri and the leader of our Senate Law Enforcement Caucus, who arranged an opportunity for us to speak on the floor, and I thank him for that.

I wish to commend my colleagues Senators GRASSLEY and FEINSTEIN for putting together the National Police Week Resolution. As of yesterday afternoon, there were 75 cosponsors to this resolution, which is more than we have had previously.

In 2017, the law enforcement community lost 199 of its bravest to line-of-duty incidents. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund reports that 53 officers have given their lives in 2018; 28 of those killed by firearms. This is a 56-percent increase over the same period in 2017.

I am very grateful that in Alaska we have not lost an officer in 2018. We are praying that continues and that we don't see any moving forward, but we know, like every other State out there, we are living on borrowed time.

Law enforcement families live on borrowed time. The job is inherently dangerous, and we pray and wish and hope that loved ones return home at

the end of his or her shift. Really, we know there are no guarantees, and there never will be.

The last Alaska officer to give his life to protect ours was Sergeant Allen Brandt. He was with the Fairbanks Police Department. His end of watch was October 28, 2016. Sergeant Brandt was shot multiple times just a couple of weeks before his death. Everyone thought he would survive his injuries. I had an opportunity to speak with him while he was in the hospital with his wife and his best friend. He was released from the hospital. Eight days after the shooting, Allen felt strong enough to actually appear before the Fairbanks City Council in person to thank the community for their outpouring of love and support and the unconditional love they had offered him and his family in the wake of this tragedy. He was very thankful to the community, most certainly, but he also went on to admonish the community. He said:

We need your support, not just when bad things happen. The officers do a hard job and most of the time it's thankless.

Those were truly his famous last words. He went to Anchorage for a second surgery a few days later, and he died on the operating table.

Officer Allen is clearly not forgotten in the Fairbanks community. He lived a hero's life, and his words before the Fairbanks City Council will be long remembered: "We need your support, not just when bad things happen." That has to be the reminder to all of us all of the time—to be there for those who are serving us, to be there to support them.

In an editorial published this morning, the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner offers the following:

With police receiving much negative media attention on the national level, sometimes people forget the vast majority of police officers are good men and women who put their lives on the line. . . . Take time to remember the . . . fallen officers who have given their lives up for their communities. And be sure to thank the police officers you do see for the hard job they do, even if nothing bad has happened lately.

Those were words taken from the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner this morning.

This week, thousands of members of the law enforcement family have come to Washington, DC, for public ceremonies on the Mall and here at the Capitol. There have been private moments visiting lost colleagues at the memorial site. The surviving relatives of the fallen are grieving and recovering at events sponsored by Concerns of Police Survivors. This is a great organization, a vital organization, whose existence is barely known outside of the law enforcement community. I have had several—several—opportunities over the years to work with this extraordinary organization as they have been there for the families who have lost their heroes.

There are ample opportunities this week to thank members of our law en-

forcement family for their sacrifices in public and, certainly, ample opportunities every day of the year to thank our officers in private, starting with our own U.S. Capitol Police who greet us at the door every morning. They remain on post when we leave at the end of very long days. They are here for us day in and day out.

I would just end with an observation. I think the editorial this morning in the Fairbanks paper offers up words of wisdom. As the memories of National Police Week 2018 fade, I hope we will not wait until next May to thank the men and women of law enforcement for their selfless and at times thankless service to our communities.

With that, I thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HEALTHCARE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today in support of legislation I have introduced with several of my colleagues—Senators MURKOWSKI, BARRASSO, STABENOW, and CASSIDY—that would remove a barrier that prevents patients from getting the most affordable prescription drug prices at the pharmacy counter.

Mr. President, Americans have the right to know which payment method—whether it is using insurance or paying with cash out of pocket—would provide the most savings when they are purchasing prescription drugs. The two bills we have introduced would establish some clarity in this incredibly opaque drug pricing system.

Nearly 60 percent of Americans, including roughly 90 percent of seniors, take at least one prescription drug. In 2016, Americans spent more than \$330 billion, including a staggering \$45 billion out of pocket, on retail prescription drugs. The Federal Government picked up another \$139 billion through Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs.

Prescription drugs amount to nearly 18 percent of all healthcare expenditures and are the second fastest growing expenditure within healthcare. Moreover, two-thirds of personal bankruptcies in our country have been attributed to the cost of medical care, including prescription drugs. To make informed decisions, at the very least, we should have the right to know how much our prescription drugs cost.

At a series of hearings held by the Senate HELP Committee, I have questioned repeatedly one particularly egregious practice that conceals prices from patients at the pharmacy counter. This practice is the result of what are known as "pharmacy gag clauses." These are contract terms