

streamline and consolidate community care into a single comprehensive program, standardizing eligibility for this program and repealing the Choice program after 1 year.

The MISSION Act also includes a phasing in of an expanded Caregiver program, so that veterans of all eras can access this important benefit. This is an issue I have long worked on, having helped create the original Caregivers program at the VA. This expansion will likely help thousands of family caregivers.

In addition, the MISSION Act will help the VA better recruit quality healthcare professionals with academic and financial incentives, as well as help ensure access to care in rural and underserved areas.

I understand that there are some concerns about this legislation.

The asset and infrastructure review provision, which has been compared to the BRAC review of DOD facilities, is contentious. I joined Senator MANCHIN in efforts to pass a version of this without the AIR provision. I am disappointed that effort was blocked by our Republican colleagues, but I also appreciate the efforts of my Democratic colleagues in helping ensure safeguards in the bill around the AIR provision, so that any process includes coordination with and review by Congress, veterans service organizations, the public, and other stakeholders every step of the way.

I also recognize that there is a serious concern about privatization at the VA, a concern that is especially acute under this administration and given the fact that the VA lacks senior leadership.

Congress will need to ensure continued strong funding for the VA so that we are not sacrificing investments in VA infrastructure, direct patient care, medical research, and more in exchange for community care—which will be costly—under the MISSION Act.

We will need to continue to provide oversight during the process of selecting a VA Secretary, one who will balance the need of some veterans to access authorized private care with protecting the VA system. I look forward to meeting with the VA Secretary nominee to assess his qualifications on this and other matters soon.

It is easy for us Members of Congress to speak about this bill on the floor—to thank our veterans and their families for their service—but it is more meaningful, more important to do what we can through action.

Some of my proudest moments in Congress have included efforts to recognize, honor, and thank our veterans, but the very least we can do for our veterans is to ensure they get the care they need.

I have been working with my colleague, Senator DUCKWORTH, to help ensure that veterans and their spouses at the Illinois Veterans Home at Quincy receive high quality care, because, for the past 3 years, IVH Quincy has

been dealing with several Legionnaires' outbreaks, outbreaks that have sickened more than 65 and, sadly, killed 13.

It is unacceptable that 13 veterans died from contracting the Legionella bacteria before this Governor finally produced a comprehensive plan of action.

I have worked with and will continue to work with State and Federal officials to ensure that IVH Quincy has the technical and financial support it needs.

Let me close with this: The VA MISSION Act reflects this sentiment as well—too often, our servicemembers return home only to find themselves facing challenge after challenge, suffering from the physical and mental wounds of war. This bill will help ensure that we uphold the promise we have made, to provide the care, support, and respect our veterans have earned and deserve.

I want to thank my colleagues Senators ISAKSON and TESTER for their good-faith efforts on this bill. I am pleased to join them and others in the Senate in supporting this legislation.

(At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for vote No. 106 on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 2372, the VA MISSION Act of 2018. On vote No. 106, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 2372, the VA MISSION Act of 2018.●

REMOVAL OF NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, on May 10, I announced my intention to object to a unanimous consent request for the Senate to take up the nomination of Christopher C. Krebs who has been nominated by President Trump to serve as Under secretary of the National Protection and Programs Directorate at the Department of Homeland Security, DHS. I did so because DHS had yet to clear for public release important information about vulnerabilities in U.S. telephone networks that are being exploited, potentially by foreign governments, to target Americans.

Last week, I discussed with Mr. Krebs our shared interest in protecting Americans from sophisticated cyber security threats, particularly those that exploit flaws in U.S. communications networks. I am pleased to say that DHS subsequently provided me with a letter that included much of the information that I had previously requested. I intend to make this letter public in the coming days and believe that it will further much needed debate about the security of U.S. telephone

networks and the Federal Communications Commission's lax approach to regulating the privacy and cyber security practices of wireless carriers.

In light of this action, I will no longer object to any unanimous consent request for the Senate to take up Mr. Krebs's nomination.

HONORING PRIVATE MARTIN A. TREPTOW

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Martin A. Treptow who bravely served as a private in the U.S. Army during the First World War.

Martin enlisted in the Iowa National Guard in 1917 while working as a barber in Cherokee, IA, and was soon stationed in France as part of the 168th Infantry of the 42nd Division, the famed Rainbow Division. During the assault on Hill 212 on La Croix Rouge Farm, Martin courageously volunteered to deliver an important message to another platoon, despite heavy enemy fire. Martin successfully completed his mission but paid the ultimate sacrifice in doing so.

As his belongings were being prepared to send home to his family and friends, Martin's diary was found. His diary included an entry entitled "My Pledge," and Martin had written: "America must win this war. Therefore, I will work, I will save, I will ensure, I will fight cheerfully and do my utmost, as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone."

I ask my colleagues to join me as I proudly recognize Martin A. Treptow, whose heroic actions and inspiring words epitomize the duty and sacrifice of all the brave men and women who serve and have served the United States in defense of our freedom.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CENTENNIAL OF GRENVILLE, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Grenville, SD. The town of Grenville will be celebrating its centennial on June 8 through June 10, 2018. Grenville will host centennial events which include a parade, street dances, a softball tournament, raffles, a pig roast, children events, and much more.

Grenville, located in Day County, was given the christened name of Zielona Gora, meaning "green hills," which is an accurate description of the area's beautiful sloping hills and majestic landscape. Since its founding 100 years ago, the community of Grenville remains resilient in upholding South Dakota values. Today the robust traditions passed down by determined settlers continue to endure throughout the Grenville community.

I offer my congratulations to the citizens of Grenville on their centennial celebration and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a nomination and a withdrawal which were referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 204. An act to authorize the use of unapproved medical products by patients diagnosed with a terminal illness in accordance with State law, and for other purposes.

S. 292. An act to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5682. An act to provide for programs to help reduce the risk that prisoners with recidivate upon release from prison, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 113. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

At 3:10 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4743. An act to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 4743. An act to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the Office of Credit Risk Management within the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5243. A communication from the Acting Director of Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Policy on Audits of RUS Borrowers and Grantees" (RIN0572-AC33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 16, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5244. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clopyralid; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9977-13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5245. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pyroxasulfone; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9977-25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5246. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "VSTA Records and Reports Specific to International Standards for Pharmacovigilance" (RIN0579-AE11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5247. A communication from the Acting Chief of Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Conservation Program Recipient Reporting" (RIN0578-AA64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 21, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5248. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of two (2) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5249. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13611 of May 16, 2012, with respect to Yemen; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5250. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006, with respect to Belarus; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5251. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13712 of November 22, 2015, with respect to Burundi; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5252. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 on November 14, 1979; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5253. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursu-

ant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Ceiling Fan Light Kits" (RIN1901-AC87) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5254. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Oregon; Regional Haze Progress Report" (FRL No. 9978-16-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5255. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Jersey; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Lead, 2008 Ozone, 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide, 2010 Sulfur Dioxide, 2011 Carbon Monoxide, 2006 PM10, 2012 PM2.5, 1997 Ozone, and the 1997 and 2006 PM2.5 National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9978-24-Region 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5256. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California; California Mobile Source Regulations" (FRL No. 9978-19-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5257. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to California State Implementation Plan; Bay Area Air Quality Management District; Stationary Sources; New Source Review" (FRL No. 9977-24-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5258. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the extension of waiver authority for Turkmenistan; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5259. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Departmental Offices, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Department of the Treasury Acquisition Regulations; Tax Check Requirements" (48 CFR Parts 1009 and 1052) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5260. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; CY 2018 Updates to the Quality Payment Program; and Quality Payment Program: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstance Policy for the Transition Year; Corrections" (RIN0938-AT13) (CMS-5522-F2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 21, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5261. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Japan to