

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 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.")

#### CHILD PROTECTION IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2017—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

DACA

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I will continue my remarks about the importance of passing the Dream Act and the work of the Common Sense Caucus, in which the Presiding Officer has been involved, to try to find a path forward to protect these Dreamers while understanding the combination that we could have for increased border security at the same time.

What you have going on right now in our country is fear, as Senator DURBIN has pointed out, with over 800,000 people who have been here, as I said, through no fault of their own and with 97 percent of them working or in school. Just yesterday, I met with the Catholic Conference—people from the Catholic Church in my State—and some of the Dreamers, and I heard again of the account of someone who is in school and is doing well, who wants to work, and who wants to stay in our State. When I hear these stories, I am always reminded of the oldest Dreamer I ever met, Joseph Medina, who was born in Mexico.

He came over to this country and didn't know he had been brought over to the country illegally. His parents had died. He grew up in Sleepy Eye, MN—a little town. He decided to sign up to serve our country during World War II. He then found out he was undocumented. When I met him at age 99, in his words, back then, the military took you over to Canada for a night, and you stayed in a hotel. You came back, and you were a citizen because they wanted you to serve in the military. He then served bravely under General MacArthur. He came back to the United States and got married and had a son. That son served our country in the Vietnam war.

I met their entire family and stood with them in front of the World War II Memorial when he was 99 years old—Joseph Medina—along with two other Dreamers, who were two kids from a Minnesota suburban high school who wanted to join the Air Force, but, at the time, they were not able to. He wanted them to be able to serve our country just as he had served our country. He died just this last year at age 103. I am doing it for him and for the 6,000 Dreamers who live in Minnesota.

As we know, we have been seeing them lose their DACA status since the administration's decision. Not only would this mean deportation if we don't do something about this, it means people will basically be led away from their jobs—people who are teaching school, who are working at jobs in our hospitals and in our neighborhoods, and suddenly they will not be able to work. We cannot let that happen in America, and I cannot let that happen in our State. That is why we must continue this work. We must get this done and the sooner, the better.

The Dream Act is based on a simple principle. Dreamers were brought to the United States as children and only know this country as their home, and they should be given the opportunity to contribute to our Nation and become citizens.

Passing the Dream Act isn't just the morally right thing to do, which the majority of Americans agree with, it also makes economic sense. One recent study estimated that ending DACA could cost the country over \$400 billion over the next 10 years. It would cost Minnesota more than \$376 million in annual revenue and have an immeasurable impact on families who would be ripped apart.

The unemployment rate in my State is in the 3-percent range, and this population is working in our State and an important part of our State's employment force, just as our legal refugees are. That is why this rhetoric and some of the things we are hearing about Dreamers isn't good.

I truly appreciate those Republicans in the Senate, including the Presiding Officer, who have been willing to work with us on this issue and talk to the people in their States to try to come together on passing some version of the Dream Act and allowing these Dreamers to stay.

We will continue this fight. We stand in support of the Dream Act, we stand in support of those Dreamers, and we work every single day to find a solution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. President.

I am honored to rise after my distinguished colleagues from Minnesota and Illinois to issue a simple demand: We must act now to pass legislation protecting the Dreamers against mass, draconian deportation. We must act now effectively, not cosmetically or superficially. We must act now without unacceptable preconditions and hostage-taking amendments that cut immigration—a betrayal of our American values.

We cannot ask Dreamers to languish in uncertainty any longer. These young people are Americans in all but name. They grew up in this country, and they went to our schools. They serve in our military and support our economy.

They epitomize the American dream. These young people work hard, and they give back. Deporting Dreamers would be cruel, irrational, inhumane, and very simply repugnant to the American values that every Member of this Chamber holds dear.

When DACA was adopted in 2012, it changed the lives of these young people. It opened new doors to opportunity. Dreamers could come out of the shadows. They could use driver's licenses, attend college, and fully participate in our economy.

When DACA was adopted, we made a promise to the Dreamers. We promised that if they come forward and provide the U.S. Government with their most basic personal and private information, this information will never be used against them. We assured them that they have a place in this country. Now, with the complicity of this body, that promise is about to be broken. I say "complicity" because the President, in September, is the one who committed the act of breaking that promise by saying that he was going to end the DACA Program, and he gave Congress 6 months to remedy that broken promise. He threw to Congress a ticking time bomb that literally would rip apart the lives of 800,000 or 1.8 million—the numbers vary; the principle is the same. Ripping apart their lives would be the consequence.

I have said it before, and I am going to say it again. Great countries do not break their promises. The United States is the greatest country in the history of the world. We should not be breaking our promises. We should not even threaten to break our promises to innocent young people, men and women who know only this country and whose whole lives are here.

The President's decision to rescind DACA threatens to tear them away from their families, their jobs, and their communities, where they make a difference for the better. It is threatening their lives with total disarray, forcing them to go back to countries where they barely lived and have no life. It derails their future. We are a country better than this kind of inhumanity.

I want to talk again about Jonathan Gonzales-Cruz, a college student at Southern Connecticut State University. He is shown here, and I am behind him. He was attending a rally in support of the Dreamers, but I had the privilege of meeting Jonathan well before this rally. He shared his story with me, and I shared it with this Chamber in January.

Jonathan was born in Mexico. He came to the United States when he was just 4 years old. The United States is his home. It is the only country he has ever known. He is set to graduate this spring with honors in economics and math after receiving a full scholarship to attend Southern Connecticut State University.

Like many, due to the President's rescission of DACA and this Chamber's

failure to act, which is complicity, Jonathan has been compelled to delay his dream of continuing his education and attending law school. However, Jonathan hasn't abandoned his steadfast commitment to helping others and giving back to Connecticut and this Nation.

I recently had the honor of writing a letter of recommendation on his behalf in his pursuit of a public policy fellowship. Despite the uncertainty around his own immigration status, Jonathan believes so much in this country and our ideals that he continues to seek out opportunities to give back. That is the purpose of his fellowship, and that is the reason I wrote a letter of recommendation.

He first became compelled to tell his story after his father was deported. He was unable to even say goodbye before his father was ripped away from his family.

If Congress fails to act, Jonathan could lose his DACA protection. He could be one of those 800,000 who have legally told the government where they are, what they are doing, how to call them, and he could be deported—one of 800,000 who could be swept away in a mass deportation, unprecedented in this great country.

In the meantime, he is anguished and anxious, as are many other DACA young people who are afraid to go to school or to health clinics or to courts or police stations if they are victims of crimes, such as domestic violence. My office meets with countless numbers of them from Connecticut and across the country. Like Jonathan, they are at risk of losing those DACA protections. They have become moms and dads and leaders in our communities.

Congress must do its job. Congress must act, and it must act now to provide permanent status and a path to citizenship for Jonathan and 1.3, 1.8 million Dreamers in this Nation.

Due to a Federal court order, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, USCIS, has been ordered to accept renewal applications for DACA recipients. Once again, the courts have been a bulwark for individual rights and liberties, but this reprieve is no final remedy. We must redouble our determination to assist these young people and protect them, which must be done right away because deportation is a continuing threat. President Trump's cruel and unconscionable decision to end this program is intolerable, but so is our complicity if we fail to act.

DACA protections are set to expire in less than a month. There is no more kicking the can down the road. The ticking time bomb thrown by President Trump into this Chamber is set to explode. We have the power to defuse it and to end this awful menace. Refusing to do so would be a grave abdication of responsibility.

Acting now in the service of the American dream is not only the right thing to do, it is in our self-interest to do so. It is in our self-interest in a

basic economic sense. In reality, these young people are integral to our economy. If Congress fails to pass the DACA bill, we will lose \$500 billion over the next 10 years. We will lose \$25 billion in Medicare and Social Security taxes. In my home State alone, we stand to lose more than \$300 million a year.

Now is the time to abandon the myth that the Dreamers work on the sidelines of American society. They are part of the economic fabric as well as the social tapestry of this Nation. They help drive our economy. They are small business owners. They are physicians, scientists, and teachers. Continued waiting would mean instability in the job market as companies are forced to fire DACA recipients and train new people in anticipation of the March deadline. As I said before, forcing these outstanding members of our community to leave would be a logistical and humanitarian nightmare.

Time is not on our side. If Congress passes a DACA bill, USCIS will need to develop new regulations. It will have to process applications. It will have to set up the bureaucratic structure and rules of procedure. We cannot delay because the Dreamers stand to lose their protections simply by the passage of time.

Contributing members of our society, like Jonathan, who have done nothing wrong, have no criminal record, will be dragged back into the shadows. They will be unable to attend our colleges, work in jobs. Once again, they will dread the sound of police sirens.

The character of our Nation, who we are, is at stake. So many Americans relate to the story of these Dreamers because they can see themselves through their eyes. They can see their own immigrant story in Jonathan. So many of us—my family included—came to this country with hopes for a better life and a future. Jonathan had no choice; he was brought here as a child. But the American dream belongs to him too.

We must pass DACA legislation now.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate at 7:27 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 11:39 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. GARDNER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### HONORING HOMETOWN HEROES ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that the Senate has received a message from the House to accompany H.R. 1892.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The leader is correct.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move that the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany H.R. 1892.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

*Resolved*, That the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1892) entitled "An Act to amend title 4, United States Code, to provide for the flying of the flag at half-staff in the event of the death of a first responder in the line of duty.", with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 1930

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment, with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] moves to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment with an amendment numbered 1930.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to concur with further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment with a further amendment to H.R. 1892, an act to amend title 4, United States Code, to provide for the flying of the flag at half-staff in the event of the death of a first responder in the line of duty.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, David Perdue, Thom Tillis, James Lankford, John Kennedy, Roy Blunt, Richard C. Shelby, Lisa Murkowski, Susan M. Collins, Steve Daines, John Boozman, John Barrasso, James M. Inhofe, Orrin G. Hatch.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays on my motion to concur with further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.