

national security, Americanism, and children and youth.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have seen up close Legionnaires' and the American Legion Auxiliary's dedication and the results their efforts have produced in Arkansas and across our entire country. I am proud to recognize the American Legion on its 100 years of advocacy and celebrate this century of service with the 2 million members who are making a difference each day as Legionnaires.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Matey nomination expire at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, on International Women's Day, we reflect on the enormous contributions women make worldwide to their communities and their countries across every aspect of society including justice, politics, culture, peacebuilding, the economy, and national security. On this day, we also recognize and recommit to fighting on behalf of the many women whose voices governments seek to silence. Around the world, women take enormous risks to advance the rights of their fellow citizens and to promote the principles of freedom of expression, religion, and assembly. They fight for rights to access education and healthcare, and they fight discrimination, corruption, and violence. For their words and for their actions, all too often, governments turn these women into political prisoners.

Today, I want to highlight just a tiny fraction of the countless number of women and girls held behind bars unjustly. Similarly, unfortunately, the repressive governments detaining these women are just a small fraction of the governments around the world that lock up women for exercising their fundamental freedoms.

Just last week, the government of Saudi Arabia announced that it would

put on trial its country's leading women's rights activists who have been in prison without charges since May 2018. The crackdown on these activists began just weeks ahead of the much-anticipated lifting of the ban on women driving, one of the very causes for which many of the detained activists had campaigned. While some were quickly released, others remain imprisoned. They include Loujain al-Hathloul, Aziza al-Yousef, Eman al-Nafjan, Nouf Abdelaziz, Mayaa al-Zahrani, Samar Badawi, Nassima al-Saada, Hatoun al-Fassi, Shadan al-Onezi, and Amal al-Harbi. Credible reports indicate that Saudi interrogators tortured at least four of the women, including with electric shocks and whippings and sexual harassment and assault.

In the Philippines, Senator Leila de Lima, a brave champion of human rights, launched an investigation into extrajudicial executions that began shortly after President Duterte took office in 2016. As one of the only leaders bold enough to oppose President Duterte's "war on drugs," she has faced prolonged arbitrary detention, according to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. President Duterte has sought to silence her courageous voice as she spoke out against widespread human rights violations, including thousands of extrajudicial executions of mostly poor and marginalized people.

In Egypt, Hanan Badr el-Din, a human rights defender and cofounder of the Families of the Forcibly Disappeared Association, was detained on May 6, 2017, at Qanatar prison while visiting an individual who had been forcibly disappeared. She started her activism following the forced disappearance of her husband in 2013. She suffers from a serious genetic disorder, and her health is rapidly deteriorating.

China is responsible for some of the most grave human rights abuses, including of women. China has imprisoned hundreds of thousands of Uighur women in detention camps across its northwest region. These women are forced to renounce their Muslim religion and Uighur language and memorize Chinese propaganda. Forced labor, torture, and death are common. Thousands of children have been separated from their mothers and fathers and placed in a separate network of orphanages. One husband of a Uighur woman told Human Rights Watch: "My wife was about to go back overseas but they took her passport. And when she went to ask to get her passport back, they told her she needs to be subjected to political education for 10 days, and then they would let her go. That was on July 20, 2017. Since then, she's been in a political education camp." The family of Guligeina Tashimaimaiti, a Uighur PhD student who was last seen in December 2017 when she returned from studying in Malaysia, for example, fears she is in detention and at risk of torture and other ill treatment.

China has also targeted Tibetan Buddhist nuns. The government expelled hundreds of nuns in 2017 from Larung Gar in Sichuan, the world's largest Tibetan Buddhist center. Their homes were demolished; they were barred from entering other monasteries, and faced detention, harassment, and abuse.

In Eritrea, Aster Fissehatsion has been held incommunicado without charge or trial since September 2001. Her whereabouts, 17 years later, are still not known. Aster Fissehatsion was arrested together with 10 other members of a group of political dissidents known as the Group of 15, or G-15, including her former husband, former Vice President and foreign minister of Eritrea, Mahmoud Ahmed Sheriffo.

Perhaps, most tragically, this is just a snapshot of some of the brave women who dare to speak up for fundamental rights and values.

So on this International Women's Day, as we reflect on the achievements of women and reflect on the work that remains to be done, I call on all of us to redouble our efforts to free women political prisoners. Governments have the responsibility to promote the safety, well-being, and fundamental rights of their citizens. I call on governments who are unjustly detaining, harassing, and torturing women for exercising their fundamental rights to immediately release these politically motivated detentions. As they continue to struggle, let us all take up the mantle of their cause.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING MIAMI TOUR COMPANY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, as chairman of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize a small business that exemplifies the unique American entrepreneurial spirit. Today, it is my distinct pleasure to name Miami Tour Company as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Founded in 2002, Miami Tour Company has quickly become a premier provider of tours and activities in south Florida. Husband and wife, Gus and Michelle Moore, founded the company based on the principle of providing the best customer experience possible. Gus and Michelle met while working at a restaurant and bonded over a shared passion for making sure that visitors to their home State have a great experience. After serving thousands of hungry patrons and learning how to make visitors to Miami as happy as possible, Gus and Michelle decided to start a business. With their combined knowledge of the area and a knack for anticipating their customer's needs, a tour company was the perfect fit. With their savings from working at the restaurant, the couple

bought a tour bus, and the Miami Tour Company was born.

Seventeen years later, Miami Tour Company has grown to transport 35,000 passengers annually and have served more than 600,000 clientele. Their fleet now includes motorcoaches, minibuses, vans, SUVs, shuttle buses, and boat tours. The company's local guides run day tours through Key West, Orlando, the Everglades, and Miami Beach. They have also instituted a GPS-guided system in their tour buses that triggers high-quality digital voice recordings at locations of interest, making them the only tour company in Florida to offer this technology. To expand their customer base, the company has begun offering the recordings in Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin, French, Italian, German, and Russian, allowing visitors from around the world to enjoy the attractions that Florida has to offer.

On top of providing enjoyable and informative tours, Miami Tour Company gives back to their community. They guide local elementary students on free historical bus tours throughout Miami and offer students free eco-tourism trips to the Everglades. They also give back to their community by providing complimentary travel charters for activities for the children and families of Sophia's Hope. In addition, they donate portions of their proceeds to the Miami Beach Holocaust Memorial and the Miami Beach Botanical Gardens. Miami Tour Company has been a true small business success story. Their dedication to hospitality has been recognized with an A-plus rating from the Better Business Bureau and a Certificate of Excellence from online reviewers.

Gus and Michelle's commitment to an exceptional customer experience represents the standard of hospitality with which Florida small businesses are known for. Companies like Miami Tour Company are one of the many reasons that visitors enjoy south Florida and keep coming back. I would like to congratulate Gus, Michelle, and all of the employees at Miami Tour Company for being named the Senate Small Business of the Week. I wish them good luck and look forward to watching their continued growth and success.●

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 sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020—PM 5

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975, as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; to the Committees on the Budget; and Appropriations:

To the Congress of the United States:

In just over 2 years, together with the American people, we have launched an unprecedented economic boom. Since I was elected, we have created more than 5 million new jobs, including half a million manufacturing jobs. Nearly 5 million Americans have been lifted off food stamps. Unemployment is the lowest in nearly half a century. African American unemployment, Hispanic American unemployment, and Asian American unemployment rates have all reached historic lows. Our Nation is experiencing an economic miracle—and it is improving the lives of all our citizens.

We have achieved these extraordinary gains thanks to historic tax cuts and an unprecedented regulatory reduction campaign, through unleashing American energy production, systematically fixing bad trade deals, and remaining absolutely committed to putting the needs of the American worker first.

My Administration worked with the Congress to pass unprecedented legislation to confront the opioid crisis, a sweeping new farm bill, groundbreaking criminal justice reform, major investments to rebuild the military, and historic Department of Veterans Affairs reforms to ensure that our great veterans have access to high quality healthcare.

We are also making our communities safer. To target violent crime, my Administration has increased support for Federal, State, and local law enforcement. We have added nearly 200 new violent crime prosecutors across the United States. And last year, the Department of Justice prosecuted more violent crimes than ever before. As a result, violent crime is falling.

My Administration is confronting the national security and humanitarian crisis on our southern border, and we are accepting the moral duty to create an immigration system that protects the lives and jobs of our citizens. This includes our obligation to the millions of immigrants living in the United States today who followed the rules and respected our laws.

In the 20th century, America saved freedom, transformed science, and defined the middle class standard of living. Now we must write the next chapter of the great American adventure, turbo-charging the industries of the fu-

ture and establishing a new standard of living for the 21st century. An amazing quality of life for all of our citizens is within reach. We can make our communities safer, our families stronger, our culture richer, our faith deeper, and our middle class bigger and more prosperous than ever before.

We are now addressing our challenges from a position of strength. My 2020 Budget builds on the tremendous progress we have made and provides a clear roadmap for the Congress to bring Federal spending and debt under control. We must protect future generations from Washington's habitual deficit spending.

This year, I asked most executive departments and agencies to cut their budgets by at least 5 percent. In addition to reflecting those reductions, my Budget invests in the following priorities:

Securing our Borders and Protecting our Sovereignty. As President, my highest duty is the defense of our Nation—which is why finishing the border wall is an urgent national priority. All who are privileged to hold elected office must work together to create an immigration system that promotes wage growth and economic opportunity, while preventing drugs, terrorism, and crime from entering the United States. Immigration policy, like all policy, must serve the interests of Americans living here today—including the millions of new Americans who came here legally to join our national family. The American people are entitled to a strong border that stops illegal immigration, and a responsible visa policy that protects our security and our workforce. My Budget continues to reflect these priorities, and I look forward to working with the Congress to finish the border wall and build a safe, just, and lawful immigration system that will benefit generations of Americans to come.

Preserving Peace through Strength. A strong military, fully integrated with our allies and all our instruments of power, enables our Nation to deter war, preserve peace, and, if necessary, defeat aggression against United States interests. To that end, my Budget requests \$750 billion for national defense, an increase of \$34 billion, or 5 percent, from the 2019 enacted level. The Budget funds the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy, building on the major gains we have already made throughout the world.

Protecting our Veterans. Our Nation's brave warriors and defenders deserve the best care America has to offer—both during and after their active service. Last year, I signed into law the historic VA MISSION Act of 2018 to reform and transform the Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare system into an integrated system for the 21st century. My Budget fully funds all requirements for veterans' healthcare services and provides additional funding to implement the VA MISSION Act of 2018.