

and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 292 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Alexander	Ernst	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Perdue
Blackburn	Gardner	Peters
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Braun	Hawley	Romney
Burr	Hoeben	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cassidy	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Collins	Isakson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Jones	Sullivan
Cramer	Kennedy	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	McSally	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Young

NAYS—44

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Bennet	Heinrich	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	McConnell	Udall
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Paul	Wyden
Harris	Reed	

NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Roberts	Sanders
Klobuchar	Rounds	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 44.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having not voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER THE VOTE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

The Senator from Tennessee.

CONSTITUTION DAY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, one of the occasions that we celebrate every year is Constitution Day, and that actually took place yesterday. It was so exciting to visit with students, talk to constituents, and celebrate Constitution Day and the fact that we have this document.

Our Constitution is a disarmingly short document to read. When you sit down to read it, it doesn't really take a lot of time to digest it. When you are done with it, you might easily walk away thinking: That wasn't that hard after all. It is pretty simple, right? We all know that is not necessarily the case. It is easy to understand, but it is so important that we look at it in its entirety.

There is an entire body of law dedicated to tearing apart that Constitution. It is mind-boggling when you think about that. We have this document. It puts this foundation in place, and there is law that would rip it apart. There are those who would rip it apart, who are looking for answers to problems our Founders never dreamed of.

There has been a lot of talk lately concerning the Founders and how their backgrounds and status in society informed the document that eventually became what is known as the Constitution of the United States. But I think it is even more important to think of the Founders as human beings who came to the Constitutional Convention harboring ambitions and goals equal in gravity to our present passions—their desire to have a United States of America.

They wanted freedom from their oppressors on the other side of the world and from a system of government that would inevitably lead to oppression. They said: No more. Let's write this into the fiber of this Nation—freedom; freedom from our oppressors. They wanted to reforge the chains that broke during the Revolution into ties that would bind the several States together under a common goal—bound together, united in purpose and in freedom. After years of blood and uncertainty, they desperately wanted control over their own lives and over their futures, individual freedom—freedom to choose.

Because they were human, yes, they wanted power, and so they argued. They argued about everything. They argued about States' rights. They argued about a nation having a debt. They argued about the Confederacy and compacts versus the Federalists' vision of "a more perfect Union." But through all that, the Founders still managed to create a document that set forth a new standard of government—a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. It is a form of governance that is responsible not to the government but is responsible to the people.

They gave us a framework, but there are a great many things that they declined to set in stone. They made a conscious choice, which is why we continually find ourselves engaging in philosophical combat. Unfortunately, as part of that battle, many of my friends on the other side of the aisle have gone so far as to undermine the very institutions that define this country.

Supreme Court confirmations have turned into a circus. Policy debates devolve into personal attacks. Distinguishing between news and opinion is all but impossible on many days of the week. Many of my friends on the other side of the aisle like to describe the Constitution as a living document, but I don't really follow that line of thinking. Describing our Constitution as a living document is really just a prelude to changing the rules to fit the circumstances, and, in my opinion, that is a dangerous concept.

As our Founders signed on the dotted line, the rest of the world looked toward America's shores with skepticism, and, at times, derision. They didn't understand how a government by the people and for the people could possibly fit into the existing mold.

After over 200 years of progress, there are still those who remain skeptical of the country that broke the mold and transformed from a struggling cluster of Colonies into a shining city on a hill.

I urge all of my colleagues to respect the Constitution. It is not an intellectual straitjacket. Not once has the sum of its contents acted as a barrier to progress. The Constitution is not the source of the freedoms it guarantees, but it does state definitively that its execution secured the blessings of liberty to those who bore witness to America's beginnings and to those who would come after. It is a legacy worth fighting for. Happy Constitution Day.

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.

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

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany S. 1790.

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

Resolved, That the House insist upon its amendment to the bill (S. 1790), entitled "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes," and ask for a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

COMPOUND MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move that the Senate disagree to the House amendment, agree to the request of the House for conference, and authorize the Chair to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill 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 disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request from the House for a conference, and authorize the Chair to appoint conferees in relation to S. 1790, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, Thom Tillis, John Boozman, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Jerry Moran, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, Joni Ernst, James E. Risch, Roger F. Wicker, David Perdue, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Kevin Cramer, Mitch McConnell.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived and that the cloture vote occur at a time to be determined by the two leaders.

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

TRIBUTE TO LAMAR ALEXANDER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, this week our friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Tennessee, will mark a major milestone in his State's history.

As of tomorrow, LAMAR ALEXANDER will have served as Tennessee's Governor or U.S. Senator for 24 years, 8 months, and 15 days—more combined years and offices than any other Tennessean.

Of course, Senator ALEXANDER also remains the only Tennessee Governor ever popularly elected to the Senate. He is the only Tennessee Republican to be undefeated in six statewide primary elections. And his 2008 general election vote total of 1,579,477 votes is still the largest ever recorded by a Tennessee statewide candidate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a statement from the Tennessee secretary of state, Tre Hargett, who has calculated each of these political accomplishments, be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

As impressive as these statistics are, all of LAMAR ALEXANDER's colleagues know that political record-setting is not what makes him tick. Here is something he likes to say about serving in the Senate:

It's hard to get here. It's hard to stay here. So while you're here, you might as well try to accomplish something.

Well, he certainly lived out his own advice. During Senator ALEXANDER's very first term, he got 70 Senators to support his bipartisan America COMPETES Act to help our country stay

competitive with the rest of the world. He even persuaded the Democratic and Republican leaders to join forces as the principal sponsors. When it was enacted in 2007, everyone knew who the chief engineer had been.

Senator Dan Inouye said at the time:

I wish to commend my colleague, Senator Alexander, for his broad and very intricate history of bipartisanship. If all of us in this body follow this process in all major legislation, this would be a historic session. . . . I think the Senator from Tennessee very much.

That was Senator Dan Inouye from Hawaii.

Then in 2012, after being elected three times by his peers as chairman of the Republican conference, LAMAR did something that is not often done around here: He gave up that power and his future ambitions for elected Senate leadership in order to "spend more time working to achieve results on the issues I care the most about."

Since then, not coincidentally, there have been a steady stream of important new laws dealing with those very issues. Time after time, Lamar has taken the lead, often as the principal sponsor or chief engineer. He has worked behind the scenes. He has collaborated across the aisle to get things done. He hasn't often stepped into the spotlight himself, but he has almost always been the key driving force.

As chairman of the Senate HELP Committee, he worked with Senator PATTY MURRAY to fix No Child Left Behind. President Obama called it "a Christmas miracle," and the Wall Street Journal said it was the greatest devolution of power to States in a quarter-century. The Nation's Governors and the National Education Association recognized Lamar with awards. We are dealing with a rare public servant who can literally win plaudits from the Wall Street Journal editorial board and the Nation's largest teachers union at the same time.

In 2013, Senator ALEXANDER was one of a group of Senators who revamped Federal student loans with a new market-based interest rate to save hundreds of millions of dollars for students attending college.

In 2016, he and Senator MURRAY sponsored the 21st Century Cures Act. It is landmark legislation that I was proud to be involved with and view as the most significant law of that entire Congress.

In 2018, again with Senator MURRAY, he offered the landmark Opioid Crisis Response Act. President Trump called it "the single largest bill to combat a drug crisis in the history of our country."

Last year, working with Senator Hatch, he was the chief engineer of once-in-a-generation legislation to ensure America's songwriters are paid fair-market value for their work.

For the last 5 years, as chairman of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, he has worked with Ranking Member FEIN-

STEIN to deliver record funding for our National Laboratories, funding to keep America No. 1 in supercomputing, and 6 years of full funding for inland waterway infrastructure.

This is quite a distinguished record, and this is far from all of it.

I have heard that Senator ALEXANDER explains to Tennesseans that they can think of Congress like a split-screen television show. On one side are the dramatic public fights, the partisan showdowns, but on the other side, he explains, you see huge bipartisan majorities working diligently on issues that directly affect the daily lives of millions of Americans. Well, that side of the screen is where you will find Senator ALEXANDER. In fact, he is a star player.

Senator ALEXANDER has announced he won't seek a fourth term in 2020. While the end of his time here may be in sight, I am confident the catalog of his hard work and leadership is nowhere near complete just yet. As chairman of HELP, he and Senator MURRAY have reported the Lower Healthcare Costs Act to the full Senate. They are working together to reauthorize and update the Higher Education Act. He and Senator FEINSTEIN have produced an appropriations bill—passed by the Appropriations Committee—that would provide a fifth year of record funding for the National Laboratories, a sixth year of full funding for our inland waterway infrastructure, and the resources to keep America No. 1 in supercomputing. And there is almost certainly more to come over the next year and a half. Lamar's service reminds us that there are many ways to be a transformational leader in this body.

As a young man, I was an intern for Senator John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky. He was never an elected leader but was always regarded by his colleagues as a leader because of his willingness to do what he thought ought to be done. Senator Cooper once said to me:

I not only represent Kentucky, I represent the Nation, and there are times you follow, and times when you lead.

In fact, two of the three Senate office buildings are named for Senators who were never elected the leader of their party's caucus. LAMAR ALEXANDER is just that kind of leader.

We are proud to celebrate this milestone as Senator ALEXANDER notches more combined years as Senator and Governor than anyone else from his State, but even more, we recognize the example the Senator has set for all the rest of us. It is just like he says:

It's hard to get here. It's hard to stay here. So while you're here, you might as well try to accomplish something.

Congratulations, my friend.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SEPTEMBER 17, 2019.

Hon. LAMAR ALEXANDER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR ALEXANDER: I am writing to congratulate you on your record years of

service to Tennessee. On September 19, 2019, you will have served more combined years as either Governor or United States Senator from Tennessee than any other Tennessean. This is a milestone that illustrates your dedication to public service and to Tennesseans.

September 19, 2019, marks your 9,024th day in office as either Tennessee Governor or U.S. Senator from Tennessee. Your 24 years, 8 months, and 15 days of service will then surpass the previous longest serving Governor and United State Senator from Tennessee, Isham Harris.

This is just one of your many elections records in the state. You are the only Tennessee Governor ever popularly elected to the United States Senate. You have won more Tennessee Republican statewide primary elections—six—than any other Tennessean. And your 2008 general election vote total—1,579,477 votes—is the largest vote total ever recorded by a Tennessee statewide candidate.

I congratulate you on this, and your many other, great accomplishments and I thank you for your service to our great state.

Sincerely,

TRE HARGETT,
Secretary of State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, it is such an honor to be here following Leader McCONNELL and talk about the achievements of our State's senior Senator and recognize his wonderful work, not only in DC but also in Tennessee. I want to touch on just a few of those highlights and the importance to our State.

For me, being a State senator involved in our community, coming to serve in Congress, and now serving in the Senate with our senior Senator is something that is a wonderful experience.

The majority leader just mentioned that our senior Senator will retire at the end of next year. Of course, we are all going to miss seeing him around Capitol Hill. Senator ALEXANDER has really distinguished himself as a man who is committed to Tennessee tradition and to helping Tennessee find prominence on the global stage.

Anyone who has ever entered Senator ALEXANDER's office knows that he is a music lover. What they may not know is that he is also both a classically trained pianist and a pretty good gospel and country pianist. He has even performed on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, and rumor has it that he really rocked the house the night he was there. His love of music and of Tennessee's musicians has caused him to work tirelessly in these efforts.

In the House, I started a songwriters' caucus. He did likewise in the Senate, bringing the issues that confront our Nation's performers into the Senate, finding solutions, and, as the leader mentioned, passing and being instrumental in the crafting—not just the passing—of the Music Modernization Act. He was honored just this week by the Nashville Songwriters Association International, which gave him the White Hat Award. This is an honor that he and I share.

It is important to note that the White Hat Award has only been given 15 times in the 52 years of that organization's history.

As Governor—then Governor, now Senator ALEXANDER opened the doors to automobile industries, including Saturn, GM, Nissan, and auto parts producers, which solidified Tennessee's place in the global economy. As Senator, he has focused on improving Tennessee from the inside out, giving priority to practical concerns. He led the charge on healthcare, education, and, as the leader mentioned, the opioid crisis. He has supported teachers, stood up for working moms, and enacted tax policies that kept more money in the wallets of Tennesseans.

Today, I rise to honor a leader, a friend, and, I have to say, the team captain for our annual Crockett Cup baseball game. And they were the winners. They are the holders of the Crockett Cup.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

S. 1790

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, I rise to urge this body to protect the Constitution, to defend the separation of powers, and to prevent an unauthorized, unconstitutional war with Iran.

The Constitution is clear. Under our article I powers, the Constitution spells out that Congress shall have the authority to declare war.

The Founders debated which branch of government should be given the solemn power to wage war. Entering into battle had been the personal prerogative of Kings, and Kings had shown that they would bankrupt their countries and risk lives because of self-serving, power-seeking feuds.

Therefore, our Constitution's Founders placed the decision to go to war with the people's representatives. They wanted any decision to wage war to reflect the will of the people. They deliberately rejected giving this most consequential decision only to the President.

Yet, despite the clarity of the Constitution, President Trump insists—without any equivocation—that he does not need congressional approval to engage in military hostilities against Iran, and now, instead of working with the U.S. Congress, he is publicly deferring to the royal family of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Our President said we are waiting for Saudi Arabia to say “under what terms we would proceed.”

When discussing retaliation for the attack on a Saudi oil-processing facility, our President has praised the

Saudis as good customers who “[pay] cash.”

President Trump explained further as follows:

[T]he fact is that the Saudis are going to have a lot of involvement in this if we decide to do something. They'll be very much involved, and that includes payment. And they understand that fully.

Does this Congress think the patriotic men and women of our military are mercenaries at the service of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia? I reject that idea completely. When a President is threatening a military attack because of a foreign King's oil interests, it is well past time for Congress to assert its institutional authority.

Congress needs to make it clear: The President cannot begin a war with Iran without coming here first, coming here to the Congress.

In June, we voted on a bipartisan amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that prohibited any war with Iran unless authorized by Congress.

Getting a vote on the Udall-Kaine-Paul amendment was historic, and a bipartisan majority of Senators voted to support our amendment that day.

The House of Representatives has sent us its NDAA, which includes a bipartisan provision prohibiting war against Iran without congressional approval. The NDAA is now going to a Senate-House conference committee. The conference committee must adopt our amendment that prohibits unauthorized war against Iran.

Since our vote in June, tensions with Iran have not subsided; they have only increased. The threat of miscalculation and unauthorized war has only gotten more serious. This week, the President, on Twitter, is threatening that the U.S. military is “locked and loaded” on behalf of the Saudi Kingdom.

Iran's behavior in the region is highly problematic, but Saudi Arabia's oil interests do not determine whether the United States goes to war. Congress determines that, Congress and Congress only, based on our national interests.

Rather than threats of war, the right move is active diplomacy to lower tensions in the region.

We are at this point in the Middle East because of the Trump administration's failed policies. Its unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement, its maximum pressure policy, its abandonment of diplomacy—these policies are only causing more chaos in the region and doing nothing to advance U.S. interests.

When the President unilaterally withdrew from the Iran agreement in May 2018, against the advice of his military and intelligence Chiefs, he promised he would get us a better deal.

The deal we had in place secured for the United States and the world an Iran that would not develop nuclear weapons. It was a deal that had strict verification requirements and a deal his advisers and outside independent groups said Iran was complying with.

It has now been 16 months since the President tore up that deal and said he could get us a better one. Well, the President's supposed deal-making prowess has only produced increased tensions, bringing us to the brink of war.

In June, we were 10 minutes away from an attack that likely would have cost Iranian lives. Even after that aborted strike, the President threatened Iran with "obliteration like you've never seen before." Now we are "locked and loaded."

While it is a positive development that John Bolton is no longer whispering in the President's ear—urging regime change in Iran—this mercurial President could get us into a war before we know it, but these are my own views about the President's foreign policy. I understand others in this body do not share them, including others who voted to support this amendment previously.

I want to underscore that this is not about what you think of the President. This is about defending the separation of powers as outlined in the Constitution, and this is about standing up for the will of the American people. The American people do not want another endless war in the Middle East.

While our military is the most capable on Earth, no conflict with Iran would be easy. Iran has twice the population of Iraq and is four times the size. Even so-called targeted strikes could escalate into a much wider war.

Make no mistake, our amendment retains the President's authority to defend against any attack upon us. While the chief complaint from opponents of the amendment was that it tied the President's hands from attack, this is a false argument. The amendment expressly reserves the President's powers to defend the Nation. The Department of Defense's rules of engagement remain in place. The President's full authority as Commander in Chief to repel an attack and defend the Nation remains intact.

If there are still concerns, we can continue to consult experts and refine language in conference. That is part of the regular order, but the Defense bill must prohibit an unauthorized war with Iran.

For too long, Congress has abdicated its constitutional duty to decide matters of war and peace. We have hidden from the hard votes. We have allowed the Executive to fill the vacuum.

We in this body need to step up to the plate and assume our constitutional responsibilities. This is not about partisan politics. This is not about tying the hands of the President in defense of our country. This vote is not even about whether you think we should or should not go to war against Iran. Even if you think military action on behalf of the downed drone or Saudi oil is justified, the place to debate and make that decision is on this floor in this Congress. It is not the decision of one man in the White House.

I am making this call to our conferees: Affirm the Constitution. Affirm our sworn responsibility to uphold the Constitution. Affirm that our men and women in uniform will not be sent off to risk their lives in war unless the people's representatives make that somber decision.

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

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

AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives face many votes on many subjects. Most of them you vote on and forget very quickly. There are some you will never forget. At least two votes that I cast here 18 years ago are on that list in terms of my Senate service.

It was 18 years ago, and just shortly after the 9/11 attack in 2001, in which 3,000 innocent Americans lost their lives. President George W. Bush came to Congress and asked for authority under our Constitution to wage a war—in fact, to wage two wars. He wanted authority from the U.S. Senate and Congress to invade Iraq and to invade Afghanistan. There was a long debate leading up to it about why it would be necessary for us to start a war with those two nations.

In the case of Iraq, the argument was made that Saddam Hussein, their leader, had weapons of mass destruction that were dangerous to the region and, ultimately, dangerous to the United States. He was a tyrant and everyone knew it, but those threats were the ones that led many people to conclude that the invasion of Iraq was necessary. I disagreed. We cast that vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, and 23 of us voted no—1 Republican and 22 Democrats.

It turned out, after we invaded Iraq and took a close look, there were no weapons of mass destruction. The real basis for the war did not exist.

Eighteen years later, having lost almost 5,000 American lives and spent trillions of dollars, we are still in Iraq. I don't know how this will ever end or when our troops will finally be able to come home. Hussein is gone, for sure, but the situation in that country is certainly not dramatically better than it was when we invaded it. We couldn't guarantee tomorrow what is going to happen there, whether it will be stable or friendly to the United States after all we have invested in, all we have lost in that invasion.

At the same time, we were debating a war in Afghanistan. To me, it was a different proposition. The administration said: We know the terrorists responsible for 9/11 are in Afghanistan.

What is our message to those who turn around and attack the United States and kill so many innocent people?

So I saw Afghanistan different than Iraq, and I voted for the military effort that was undertaken to go after the terrorist organization responsible for 9/11, the al-Qaida organization.

It took us years to find Osama bin Laden, who was responsible for masterminding that deadly day in our history, and to finally bring him to justice. The fact is, 18 years later, we are still in Afghanistan today. It is hard to explain. Thousands of American lives have been lost there. Millions, billions, maybe even trillions of dollars have been spent. And most people agree, the day after we leave, whenever it is, the country will revert to what it was before we walked in. There have been 18 years of sacrifice, 18 years of suffering, and even death, for America's patriotic soldiers. It is a reminder about these wars that seem like such a good idea, so necessary, the right way to respond, and here we sit with two of the longest wars in the history of the United States.

Now the question is, Are we preparing for another war? I hate to say those words, but I have to be honest. What this President has done in our relationship with Iran has brought us to the moment where we have to ask that question: Is the President preparing to ask us to go to war against Iran?

The first thing he did—one of the first things—was to disparage the Iran nuclear agreement, an agreement entered into under President Obama to stop the development of nuclear weapons in Iran. I thought it was a good agreement. I supported it and still do. I am not making any excuses for Iran. They are engaged in conduct around the world that is inspiring terrorism and threatening our allies and friends. I am making no excuses for that. But to make certain that Iran did not have nuclear weapons in the future was the right thing to do.

We entered into this agreement under President Obama. China, Russia, European nations, and others joined us, and we sent international inspectors into that country. They reported back to us regularly that there was no evidence of the development of nuclear weapons, and every door was open to them. We had surveillance on the ground in a country that has been largely secretive and isolated. I thought that was the right thing to do, and I still do. President Trump disagreed, and the United States withdrew from the Iran nuclear agreement.

Since then, there has been an escalation of tension between our two nations, between Iran and the United States. Some of it is, clearly, a reaction by the Iranians to sanctions that we have imposed, which have caused great problems with Iran and their oil supply. They have answered in kind by threatening oil tankers from other countries. It is the kind of escalation you would expect two countries that

are leading up to a confrontation to engage in. Now the questions are, Will we, in fact, go to war, and if we are prepared to, will this President—Donald Trump—follow the Constitution of the United States?

The votes I talked about 18 years ago gave the people of the United States, through their elected representatives, a decision-making part of the process. Their Members of Congress voted. The question is whether President Trump will follow his constitutional responsibility in coming to Congress for the authority to engage in a war in Iran.

I certainly don't believe the vote I took 18 years ago, before many of the Members of the Senate were even here, has authorized him or any President to invade Iran. That was never even considered when we were in that debate.

Now the question is, Will he come forward and give the American people a voice in this process in deciding whether we are going to war?

I, for one, look at this with great skepticism and even negativity. A war is so much easier to get into than it is to get out of. We have proven that over and over again. Politicians who make the speeches and rationalize these wars are usually not the ones who face combat and death on the battlefield. That is turned over to our young women and men in uniform who bravely fight for the causes we identify as politicians.

I would sincerely hope what Senator UDALL has brought to the floor, to open a conversation and discussion, is really taken to heart by the American people and, more importantly, by the White House. As Senator UDALL has reminded us, any President—this President—needs the constitutional authority to bring this Nation into a war. Without that authority, he cannot and should not move forward.

They point to the recent attacks on Saudi Arabia and their oilfields. Of course, they were terrible. Whether they came from Houthi rebels in Yemen or whether they came from Iran itself, it is terrible, but the fact is, the United States has not signed an agreement saying we are prepared to defend Saudi Arabia, whoever attacks them.

We want to have a good alliance with them—it is difficult with the current leadership—but we haven't entered into a mutual defense pact by any means. When Saudi Arabia is attacked, we are not required to muster our American troops in their defense. We should take care and be thoughtful and not escalate this situation.

Senator UDALL's amendment regarding Iran is a straightforward and timely reaffirmation of what is already in article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution—only the U.S. Congress can declare war. I am pleased to join him and others in this legislative effort to reaffirm that without the consent of Congress, no war with Iran is authorized. I hope the Defense authorization conferees will keep this in mind.

This Congress has rubberstamped too many of the President's worst in-

stincts. We must not do so again and march into another war in the Middle East. Two wars still going, still costing American lives, even to this day, are way too many. A third war at this point is unthinkable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am on the floor to talk about a problem that is far too common here in Washington; that is, Federal Government shutdowns. They don't make any sense. If we don't do something in 12 days, Congress, once again, will face an unnecessary and costly government shutdown. We have to avoid that.

I have been through five different government shutdowns since my time working in the George H. W. Bush White House back in 1990, and three shutdowns just over the last 5 years. None of them worked.

I don't know anyone who likes them now because we found out that when you shut down the government, taxpayers actually pay more, not less. It might seem like if you shut down the government, that is good for taxpayers, but it is actually bad for taxpayers. They foot the bill for the backpay of Federal workers for the days they weren't allowed to go to work, and they pay for other things, too, that they wouldn't have to pay for if Congress did its job, got its spending bills done, and didn't shut down the government. Delayed projects, late payment fees, lost productivity, deferred maintenance—it all adds up. Shutdowns also disrupt government services, of course.

By the way, it is not just the poor government programs and services at the time—that continues. So even now, 9 months since the last government shutdown, you have the Agencies and Departments saying: Well, we would like to be able to process your tax return or we would like to be able to, as I found out last week, process your 501(c)(3)—which is a charity return to give you a nonprofit status, you can get contributions that are deductible—but because of the shutdown, we are still backed up. They are delayed and late. That hurts everybody.

Federal contractors, of course, are hurt. A lot of those are our constituents, private sector individuals. Federal employees, themselves, of course, get hurt, especially those who are considered essential. They have to go to work even though they are not getting paid. A lot of people, whether it is TSA personnel at the airports or our Border Patrol down at the border, are doing their best to protect us. Yet they are told they can't get paid, so they can't make their car payment, their mortgage payment, or their rent. It puts them in a tough situation. Again, it also hurts taxpayers and families and communities all across the country.

No shutdown was more frustrating for me than the one we had most recently. It was the longest shutdown

ever. It was 35 days this past winter, in December. During that month, we all heard firsthand from our constituents how they were affected by the shutdown. I heard from NASA engineers in Cleveland, OH, as an example. We have the NASA Glenn Research Center there.

I also heard from TSA employees every time I flew. I asked them: How are you doing? They would tell me, and it was tough—missed paychecks, mounting mortgage payments that I talked about. In some cases, medical bills were piling up. Morale was down. Families were hurting. Again, even after the government opened and backpay was sent to the furloughed workers, a lot of that damage had already been done.

What we have learned is, it wasn't just Federal workers and their families who felt the effects of the shutdown. The economy as a whole suffered too. The Congressional Budget Office has done some estimates of this. After the shutdown, they estimated it had reduced economic growth by a combined \$11 billion for the fourth quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2019. Not only that, but CBO—the Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan group that looks at these issues—later projected that the rate of economic growth would have been 0.4 percent higher in the first quarter of 2019 than it was if not for the government shutdown. That sounds like a small number, 0.4 percent, but that is a big deal. That means economic growth in the first quarter of this year would have been 3.5 percent, not 3.1 percent. That is a big deal. That is billions of dollars in lost growth, not just because people weren't working who should have been working but because there was lost productivity in our economy and billions of dollars in lost growth just because we couldn't figure out how to keep the lights on here in Washington, DC.

All of this is indicative not just of the loss of purchasing power for Federal employees but also a serious ripple effect to Federal contractors, small businesses, and others who serve the Federal Government.

Shutdowns have another effect. Each time our government fails to fund itself, the public's faith in our institutions, including, of course, in this body, the Senate, the House, the Presidency, falls even further, not just here but around the world. It just seems crazy that the Federal Government can't stay open. People can't get that, and I understand why they don't get it.

Now, with the threat of another government shutdown looming just a few weeks away, let's not repeat the mistakes of the past. The reason our Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations looked at this issue over the past 9 months was to learn the lessons and to get the actual numbers to determine what the real impact was of the shutdown.

This week, the Permanent Subcommittee, of which I chair, released a

bipartisan report signed by me and the ranking member, TOM CARPER, the result of which is what we are reporting today. We learned that the total cost of the three government shutdowns that have occurred in the last 5 years alone have combined for a total of 54 days of partial or full government closure. During those three periods of shutdown, the pricetag to the American taxpayer was \$4 billion. So the three government shutdowns that have happened in the last 5 years, taxpayers had to eat \$4 billion—three shutdowns, \$4 billion.

We also learned that a lot of that number comes from the loss of productivity. Furloughed Federal workers who were prohibited from going to work during that shutdown were owed \$3.7 billion in backpay, which they got even though they weren't working because they couldn't work. Compounding that was at least another \$338 million in other costs, including extra administrative costs, lost revenue, late fees on interest payments, and other costs.

On top of everything else, the workers who weren't able to come in to work represented a combined lost productivity of about 57,000 years of lost productivity. Think about that—almost 57,000 years of productivity loss. Again, this is from folks who are Federal employees who weren't allowed to work because the government was shut down but who later got paid.

These figures, the \$4 billion in costs to the taxpayers and the 56,938 years in lost productivity, are relatively low numbers. It is actually higher than that. Do you know why? It is because although we got figures from 26 different Agencies and Departments—and over the 9 months we did this research, we sent this questionnaire around to all the Agencies and Departments—a bunch of them, comprising less than half but close to half of the workforce, refused to respond to us. Why? Because they said they didn't know how many of their workers were furloughed. They didn't know how many of their workers were essential employees. They didn't know what the lost productivity was. That is equally disturbing. That included the Department of Defense, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Justice, the Commerce Department, and the EPA. They wouldn't give us complete information about employee furloughs and backpay because they said they just didn't have the information. The cost is even higher than indicated here. We don't know how much higher, but we know it is at least this high.

We are sending letters to the Agencies that were unable to provide the complete financial information related to employee furloughs and backpay to find out why and to ask them how they plan to address those issues going forward. Over the 9 months we did this research, our Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations is not done with its work because, in the process, we uncov-

ered another problem, which is Agencies not even knowing the basic information about their workforce and what happens during the shutdown.

Our report also documents examples of how the shutdown negatively affected the Federal Government's ability to conduct important operations on a wide range of issues. I encourage people to take a look at the report.

While we shut down the government over fighting about border security—remember, that was the issue at the time, whether we are going to have a wall or not and what kind of funds were going to go to border security—the Department of Homeland Security had to delay important facility maintenance, which had a serious impact on law enforcement officer operations and safety, including at the border. The lack of these critical maintenance and repair services actually made it more risky, even endangered the lives of some law enforcement officers, and made it harder to defend the border. The shutdown certainly didn't work in that regard.

Meanwhile, the Department of Justice was forced to cancel about 60,000 immigration hearings for nondetained aliens who were scheduled during the 35 days of the shutdown. During the 35 days, you couldn't have immigration hearings. There were 60,000 immigration hearings canceled. We already had a big backlog in these hearings, as some of you have heard about, to the point that often it takes a couple of years to have your case heard by an immigration judge. Now it is even worse. Again, we still haven't resolved that issue. That is a problem that is compounded so that today you have so many of these hearings that are still outstanding.

A lot of my constituents back in Ohio were affected too. Let me give you an example. We have a poor neighborhood in Cleveland, OH. A guy wanted to start a deli there, which was a great idea. It is kind of a food desert there. This deli was ready to go, ready to be put into operation, but they couldn't get the approval by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to use the machines to accept the SNAP benefits—the food stamp benefits—so they had a really hard time launching. They couldn't make much money because a lot of people in the area were SNAP recipients. The USDA couldn't certify the machines to have it work because of the shutdown. That one was really frustrating for me.

At the Piketon, OH, uranium enrichment plant, a lot of employees were unsure if their healthcare premiums would be paid, despite potentially being exposed to levels of radiation that could be dangerous to them.

At a vineyard in Lorain, OH—Lorain County is a place where there is more wine being grown. It is exciting—this vineyard submitted six label approval requests to the Alcohol and Tobacco and Tax and Trade Bureau. The Alcohol and Tobacco and Tax and Trade Bu-

reau has to approve these labels. The owners of the vineyard were left in limbo throughout the entire shutdown as they waited for approval. They lost sales because in that business, it is all about the new thing. You want to have your new label out there, your new product out there. That was frustrating to me too. These are small business owners—again, entrepreneurs who are taking a chance, trying something exciting that has been a growth to business in our State, but they couldn't get approval.

The National Transportation Safety Board stopped an investigation of a plane crash in Wayne County, OH, that took the lives of two individuals in January because of the government shutdown.

It doesn't just affect the border or TSA or others I have talked about; it affects a lot of our constituents.

Ohioans applying for Customs and Border Protection Trusted Traveler Programs had their applications suspended during the shutdown and then faced long delays in getting their applications approved once the government reopened because of the backlog.

Home loans across the State were unable to get processed because of the backlogs at the IRS, where employees were still working overtime and weekends to catch up on work as caseloads doubled. Even last week, I talked about this nonprofit that couldn't get its 501(c)(3) status because of the backlog, the IRS said, even though it happened 9 months ago.

There are only a few examples here I have been able to give you. Again, I would encourage you to look at the report. Go onto our website for the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations and take a look at it. There are so many issues and vulnerabilities that happen in all of our States. It is clear we need to find a way to prevent this from happening again.

Part of the problem we face here is that this constant threat of shutdowns has become kind of the norm. People are already talking about it—12 days from now. Are we going to shut down or not? It has kind of a chilling effect on our economy just to talk about it.

For the past two decades, the government has routinely operated on temporary funding because we don't get our spending bills done. Congress is supposed to pass 12 appropriations bills, which comprise all the Agencies and Departments. Last year, we did a pretty good job of getting close to the 12. You have to go back to 1997 to find a year when we completed all 12 of the spending bills.

If we don't complete a spending bill and have it signed off by the House and the Senate and signed into law by the President, we do these temporary spending bills. They are called continuing resolutions. You just kind of continue the spending from the previous year. They are always short term.

So there is discussion right now of, in 12 days, having a continuing resolution. That is a lot better than a shutdown. It is not what we should be doing, because at the end of that CR, we will have another impasse, likely, and that is when you get another threat of a shutdown. It is much better to pass the actual appropriations bills.

Since 1997, we have had a total of 117 continuing resolutions to fund the government. It used to be very rare. Now it is not just common; it is the norm. So moving forward, I hope one thing we can all agree on is that we should do the appropriations process, do the individual bills, and have the debate. We are going to have differences, and that is fine. At the end of the day, we have a vote on the floor.

Today, we tried to go to the so-called minibus, a group of four different appropriations bills. It shouldn't be that hard. We should be able to get these things done. I hope we can agree that no matter what, we should not have government shutdowns.

One recommendation our report makes—again, this is a bipartisan report coming out of our subcommittee—our report says that the Congress should enact an automatic continuing resolution to permanently prevent the Federal Government from shutting down, so forever not to have shutdowns by just saying: If you don't get your spending bills done, you will simply have a continuing resolution that is automatic.

During the shutdown in January, I once again introduced our legislation called the End Government Shutdowns Act. It is legislation that now has 33 cosponsors here in the Senate. That is about a third of the Senate. It is legislation that has mostly Republicans—almost two-thirds are Republicans. In the past, it has been bipartisan. This year, it has not been. I hope it will become that. I have introduced this legislation every Congress since 2010.

My hope is that we will never have to publish this kind of a report again that talks about how many days we had a shutdown, what the cost was to taxpayers—\$4 billion in this case—over the last 5 years alone, and the 57,000 hours of lost work productivity. We shouldn't have to have these kinds of reports because we shouldn't have shutdowns. We do need to put legislation on the floor and have a vote on it to be able to stop it.

Our legislation is pretty simple. It says that you continue the spending from the previous year if you can't come to an agreement, and then after 120 days, you reduce the spending by 1 percent across the board. Why? To give the Appropriations Committees—the people who write these spending bills—the incentive to get to work, because none of them, Republican or Democrat, like across-the-board 1 percent spending cuts. They want to make their decision as to where the funding goes, and they don't want the funding to be reduced. Then, every 90 days, it reduces

it another 1 percent. Again, it is to give them the incentive to get their work done.

There is other legislation out there, one of which passed the HSGAC Committee—the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee—about a month and a half ago. It had some other elements to it—that during a shutdown, we would be restrained from doing certain things on the floor. The government couldn't travel, including the executive branch. I think some of those bells and whistles that were put on it are not great policy, but I think it is so important that we end government shutdowns, we have to figure out a way to come together as Republicans and Democrats to get this done.

I think we are at the point now where, if Democrats won't support the 1-percent cut, which is what they are saying despite supporting it previously—some of them—and the House sets a bipartisan bill, then let's look at just an auto CR, just automatically avoiding the shutdown and continuing the spending from the previous year.

The point is, we need to figure out a way to keep the lights on and not have these shutdowns. We need to stop missing our deadlines. We need to stop putting our taxpayers in a bad situation where you do a shutdown at enormous cost to them. We need to put our Federal employees in a better position, where they are not being furloughed and they are not being told: You have to go to work, or we are not going to pay you. That is not fair either.

So let's pass legislation to provide for a continuation of government spending, and let's do all we can to try to get our spending bills done to avoid getting in that situation. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will not allow us to fall back into this 12 days from now, and I hope instead we will redouble our efforts to pass spending bills on time into the future and immediately look at legislation that says: Let's end government shutdowns forever to avoid this problem going forward.

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.

Mr. CASEY. 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. CASEY. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

HEALTHCARE

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this evening to talk about healthcare. I will not have long remarks, but I do want to highlight a report that was just issued last week. The report I am holding is from the Census Bureau. The re-

port is entitled "Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2018," by the U.S. Census Bureau, dated September of 2019.

On page 2, this fairly lengthy report, which goes on for about 29 or 30 pages, has the general comparison in healthcare coverage of uninsured numbers—those without insurance in 2017 versus 2018. This is what it says on page 2 of the report under "Highlights":

In 2018, 8.5 percent of people, or 27.5 million, did not have health insurance at any point during the year. The uninsured rate and number of uninsured increased from 2017 (7.9 percent or 25.6 million).

And then it refers to a figure and a table.

Basically, what is outlined is a drop in the number of Americans covered. Looking at it another way, there was an increase in the number of uninsured from 25.6 million Americans to 27.5 million Americans—a difference of 1.9 million. Just for general reference, I will round that off to say that roughly 2 million people who had insurance in 2017 were uninsured in 2018. That is deeply troubling because the number of uninsured is up, not just generally from 2017 to 2018 but more broadly. It is a change in the trend lines where we have been for most of the last decade.

I think it is pretty clear that the Trump administration's sabotage of health insurance is, indeed, working. It is reversing coverage gains that were made under the Affordable Care Act in the years after enactment and implementation of the Affordable Care Act. We are told, as well, that the number of uninsured children is up, so more children were without insurance from 2017 to 2018.

Here is what one observer, whose name is Phil Galewitz, from the Kaiser Health News said: "For the first time in a decade, the number of Americans without health insurance has risen—by about 2 million people in 2018—according to the annual U.S. Census Bureau report released Tuesday."

That was Tuesday of last week. He goes on to cite the numbers that I just cited.

Here is another comment from Katie Keith from Health Affairs:

Coverage losses are expected to continue in 2019. This is due to a number of factors, including repeal of the individual mandate penalty, the expanded availability of non-ACA plans, and the final "public charge" rule.

She goes on from there.

These are people who spend their lives on the issue of healthcare.

A third commentator, Joan Alker, from Georgetown University Center for Children and Families said: "As a result, 4.3 million kids were uninsured in 2018—a statistically significant increase of 425,000."

Another commentator who follows healthcare, Matt Broaddus, from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities said:

[T]oday's Census data provide the clearest evidence yet that Trump Administration efforts to weaken health coverage under the

ACA are taking a toll. They include canceling most federal outreach efforts for the open enrollment period for 2018 marketplace coverage, supporting new state policies that make it harder for people to enroll or stay enrolled in Medicaid, issuing rules to expand short-term and association health plans . . . and creating public confusion about the ACA's future by refusing to defend its constitutionality in a lawsuit by Republican state officials.

Then I turn to the last reference by groups that follow this information. I will just hold up this chart. This is a chart by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. This chart depicts where we have been over the decade and where we could be at the end of the decade on healthcare. This is a reference to the uninsured rate for non-elderly Americans. That number was over 17 percent in 2009. So 17.2 percent of Americans were uninsured at that time. The chart says it then fell each year, especially after the Affordable Care Act's major coverage provisions took effect in 2014. You see it starting in 2009, and then you see the big drop. Of course, that big drop of uninsured is good news. When that chart depicts the number going down, that is obviously good news.

Then you see the Trump administration sabotage has begun eroding this progress. You see it flattening out. Now, instead of a continual diminution or decline in the uninsured number, you see kind of a flattening out of that. Then you factor in the census report, which documents at least for 1 year an increase in the number of uninsured. Then the last part of the chart says: "If the administration gets the courts to strike down the ACA, the uninsured rate would almost double."

It goes all the way up to 18.7 in 2019. Of course, the last part of the chart is a projection. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities is asserting that if a lawsuit is successful in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which we know was successful at the district court level and is now on appeal—if they are successful, this think tank, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, says that in 2019, the number of uninsured could go up to 18.7 percent, surpassing where we were in 2009, when we started to pass and then implement the Affordable Care Act, reducing substantially the number of people who were uninsured.

If you look at it this way, roughly over 6 years, the uninsured number went from about 47 million Americans down to about 27 million Americans. Twenty million-plus people gained insurance coverage in about 6 years—not even a decade.

The concern I have is that efforts undertaken by the administration, unfortunately, are seen as successful, according to the Census Bureau numbers, because the number of uninsured is going up at a time we want the number to go down. When you add in the lawsuit, which, in my judgment, is more likely to succeed than not—I don't want it to succeed; I want it to fail be-

cause I think it is an insult to declare the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act unconstitutional, therefore destroying protections for more than 100 million Americans and ripping away coverage from so many Americans that the number of uninsured would skyrocket. Why would we ever go back to the days when the number of uninsured was that high and potentially growing? Why would we ever take any step—whether there is a lawsuit or whether it is sabotage or whatever—to drive up the number of uninsured?

Let me conclude with a couple of headlines. The front page of the New York Times, dated September 11, 2019 reads: "Fewer Insured After Attacks On Health Act." If you go to the inside of the paper, on page A15 there is a longer headline that says: "Fewer Are Insured Amid Administration's Attacks On Health Act."

The Wall Street Journal—a newspaper, when I last checked, that was not necessarily supportive of the Affordable Care Act, editorially—dated September 11, page 83, reads: "Insured Rate Logs First Drop in a Decade." That means the number of uninsured is getting larger.

I would say in conclusion that we need to sound the alarm about the threat to healthcare, sound the alarm about the threat to a growing number of uninsured Americans. This is not even factoring in the lawsuit, which, as the chart depicts, would make the uninsured number skyrocket. It wouldn't go up by 1.9 million or a percentage point or two; it would go up exponentially higher.

I hope that Members of this body in both parties not only would be concerned about these trends and concerned about what would could happen if the lawsuit were successful but also would take action to prevent this dark result from playing out for the American people because the number of uninsured would explode instead of continuing to go down where Americans want it to go. We want the number of uninsured to go down. We certainly want the number of uninsured children to go down.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Senator CASEY, for speaking out on such an important issue.

He and I talked yesterday about the number of people who now have insurance in our States. In his State it is over a million; in my State it is over 900,000 because of the Affordable Care Act, because of Medicaid expansion, because of other things.

Seniors have more. Seniors are getting more preventive care, and the cost of drugs is less in spite of the fact that this institution and the President do nothing to keep the prices of drugs down. We know the White House looks like a retreat for drug company executives, so this body has not done nearly what it should.

The Affordable Care Act is so important. I appreciate Senator CASEY al-

ways standing up for kids and standing up for Medicaid and standing up for the Affordable Care Act and the impact it has made on our States.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1790

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, for the information of Senators, the cloture vote on the compound motion to go to conference on S. 1790 will occur at this time. I ask unanimous consent that if the compound motion is agreed to, it be in order for the following motions to instruct, which are at the desk—Van Hollen, Cotton, Jones, Schatz, Peters, McSally, McConnell or designee—to be considered at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader, but prior to September 26, in the form of Senate resolutions taken up and considered on the same day with no amendments in order.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant 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 disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request from the House for a conference and authorize the Chair to appoint conferees in relation to S. 1790, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, Thom Tillis, John Boozman, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Jerry Moran, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, Joni Ernst, James E. Risch, Roger F. Wicker, David Perdue, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Kevin Cramer, Mitch McConnell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the compound motion to go to conference and appoint conferees on S. 1790, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such