

integrity of the organic dairy market, increasing funding for key organic programs and directing USDA to finally implement rules that will level the playing field for small-scale producers.

The Agriculture bill also once again includes funding to support the farm to school program. This nationwide program has given children and schools across the country the tools to craft farm-fresh, healthy, and delicious meals that students enjoy, while teaching children about healthy eating habits.

The Interior bill makes significant necessary investments in clean water, clean air, stewardship of our public lands. I am particularly pleased it has critical funding through the Environmental Protection Agency that will support work on water quality, habitat and fishery restoration, and invasive species in Lake Champlain. The bill also increases funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund that will support efforts in Vermont and across the country.

For States like mine that have seen communities impacted by PFAS contamination, the bill includes additional funding for remediation.

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill continues critical support for infrastructure programs like BUILD. Vermont and States across the country rely heavily on these Federal programs.

It also invests in our Nation's rail systems that I hope will help extend and maintain rail service within my State of Vermont.

I am also pleased that this bill continues support for a development partnership between the University of Vermont and the University of Mississippi to research unmanned aircraft systems. The bill also protects important investments in affordable housing and community development.

The bill again rejects the administration's request to eliminate programs that support our communities, including HOME, Community Development Block Grant Program, NeighborWorks, and the Rural Capacity Building Program.

The Commerce, Justice, Science bill makes critical investments in economic development programs. It also invests \$7.6 billion for the 2020 census, the results of which determine how we distribute \$900 billion in Federal spending every year. It also ensures appropriate representation in Congress. This once-a-decade investment is critical.

I am grateful that this bill has increased support for the lifesaving Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, which earlier this year was given a permanent authorization by a unanimous vote in the Senate. It also supports important programs to provide support to crime victims, help to exonerate the wrongfully convicted, and to reduce recidivism.

So there are four good, bipartisan measures. I urge all Senators to support it. We have only 4 short weeks be-

fore the continuing resolution we are operating under expires. We need to do our work, and we need to do it quickly, so we can enact all 12 appropriations bills into law. These four bills are a good start.

Mr. President, I see our distinguished leader, a man we always rely on, on the floor, so I yield to Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY, RELATING TO “CONTRIBUTIONS IN EXCHANGE FOR STATE OR LOCAL TAX CREDITS”

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 258, S.J. Res. 50.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 258, S.J. Res. 50, providing for Congressional Disapproval Under Chapter 8 of Title 5, United States Code, of the Rule Submitted by the Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, Relating to “Contributions in Exchange for State Or Local Tax Credits”.

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

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 50) providing for Congressional Disapproval Under Chapter 8 of Title 5, United States Code, of the Rule Submitted by the Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, Relating to “Contributions in Exchange for State Or Local Tax Credits”.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the provisions of the Congressional Review Act, 5 U.S.C. 802, there will now be up to 10 hours of debate, equally divided between those favoring and those opposing the joint resolution.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today in support of H.R. 3055, which includes the fiscal year 2020 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, or the T-HUD, Appropriations bill. I have worked closely with Chairman COLLINS, and I want to salute her for her excellent work and her leadership. This is a bipartisan bill, which includes key investments in transportation and housing infrastructure.

It has not been an easy job, but Senator COLLINS' leadership and her thoughtful approach and our collaboration, I think, have helped us present a bill to the U.S. Senate which is more than worthy of support.

While the budget agreement provided a 4 percent increase to our allocation, we actually have \$1 billion less in spending power compared to 2019 due to declines in offsetting collections and increased costs for renewals in HUD's rental assistance program.

Working together and with the input of most Senators, we were able to put together a solid bill that earned unanimous support in the committee. While we were challenged in developing this bipartisan bill, other subcommittees have faced an impossible task as the majority caters to the President's demands for a border wall and places no guardrails to prevent the diversion of defense funds to pay for it.

This is the same issue that resulted in the President's 35-day shutdown of the Federal Government between December and January. I hope the President will heed the majority leader's axiom that “there is no education in the second kick of a mule” and avoid a rerun of this brinkmanship.

The minibus package before us is a good start to a process that will hopefully deliver final bills to the President's desk before Thanksgiving. The T-HUD bill included in this package provides critical funding to repair our bridges, roads, and transit systems in order to improve the safety, reliability, and efficiency of our transportation networks. These investments will support economic growth, create jobs, and help to address our deferred maintenance backlog across all transportation sectors.

It rejects the President's proposal to cut Amtrak funding in half and phase out long-distance passenger service. Instead, we provide \$2 billion for Amtrak, which will allow it to initiate the Northeast corridor fleet replacement, deploy additional safety technology, and invest in bridge and tunnel replacement projects.

The T-HUD bill also prioritizes funding for aviation safety in order to strengthen the safety inspector workforce and enable the Department of Transportation and the FAA to address identified weaknesses in aircraft certification process. Chairman COLLINS and I have consistently worked to support FAA's safety mission, often exceeding the budget request each year to accomplish that.

We have been disturbed by many of the official findings and unofficial reports concerning the 737 MAX certification and the culture at the FAA. As the FAA reassesses its aviation safety performance and priorities in response to the findings of the inspector general, the National Transportation Safety Board, and other inquiries, we will work to adjust funding to assist the agency in fully executing all official recommendations in a timely manner.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of enacting a full-year T-HUD bill to help address the FAA's safety and operational demands. If we end up with a yearlong continuing resolution, we will have missed the opportunity to

respond based on what we have learned in the aftermath of the devastating 737 MAX crashes.

It is also important to pass this bill because it upholds our longstanding commitment to make housing affordable for 5 million low-income families and provides funding for innovative solutions to address homelessness among the more than half a million Americans who are without stable housing.

We rejected the President's ill-advised proposals to cut \$12 billion in affordable housing and community and economic development programs like HOME, CDBG, and Public Housing. These bipartisan programs are critical components to bridging the gap between stable housing and homelessness for so many working families.

The bill also continues to invest in programs that prevent veterans' homelessness by rejecting the administration's proposal to eliminate the HUD-VASH Program. Instead, we provide \$40 million for 1,500 new housing vouchers to help veterans gain access to safe and stable housing.

This year, we were able to continue providing record funding to remediate lead-based paint and other environmental hazards in low-income housing and expand these initiatives to our Nation's public housing.

I am proud of the bill before us, and I want to work with my colleagues to consider amendments to make it even better. I encourage Senators to file amendments as soon as possible so we can continue to move this process forward.

Before I conclude, let me compliment my colleagues who are managing the other bills that are included in this minibus package—Commerce, Justice, Science, Agriculture, and Interior. They have done excellent work in crafting their bills, supported, as always, by Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY. I hope we can follow their example and move quickly to complete our work on all 12 appropriations bills before November 21.

Finally, our efforts were immensely aided and assisted by a strong and dedicated staff at the T-HUD Committee. I recognize Clare Doherty for the majority counsel and Dabney Hegg for the minority counsel for their extraordinary work, which motivated their entire staff to go above and beyond. That is one of the major reasons today Senator COLLINS and I can stand with a very good bill to present to the U.S. Senate.

With that, Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent to make a presentation that was previously scheduled on another topic.

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

RUSSIA

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to highlight my concerns about ongoing Russian information warfare operations against the American people, including the upcoming 2020 Presidential elections, the lack of a unified strategy

from the administration to counter and deter these attacks, and steps that must be taken in the near term to be better prepared in the future.

I will explain how statements by the President soliciting foreign governments to investigate political rivals for his personal benefit are part of a disturbing pattern of behavior that reinforces Russian disinformation narratives and has implications for our national security and the integrity of our democracy.

It has been almost 3 years since Russia interfered in our democracy during the 2016 Presidential election with hybrid warfare and malign influence operations. These hybrid warfare tactics, including information warfare, which I will focus on today, are not simply opportunistic meddling by Russia. Russia's purpose is to further its strategic interests. Russian President Vladimir Putin knows that, for now, Russia cannot effectively compete with the United States through conventional military means and win.

Instead, Putin seeks to use tools from his hybrid warfare arsenal to divide the United States from our allies and partners in the West and weaken our institutions and open societies from within. By weakening our democracy, Putin can strengthen Russia's perceived standing globally and bolster his autocratic grip on power at home.

Similar to the other tools in its hybrid arsenal, Russia has been developing its information warfare playbook over time, enhancing both the technical and psychological aspects of these information operations in capability, sophistication, and boldness. Lessons learned from previous information warfare campaigns culminated in the attacks the Kremlin unleashed against the United States during the 2016 Presidential election.

The 2016 information warfare campaign, according to our intelligence community—in their words—“demonstrated a significant escalation in directness, level of activity, and scope of effort compared to previous operations.” Special Counsel Mueller's report on Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential election confirmed these assessments and detailed how the Kremlin used information warfare operations, among other hybrid warfare tactics in—in the words of the Mueller report—“sweeping and systematic fashion.”

The recently released Volume 2 of the bipartisan investigation by the Senate Intelligence Committee on Russian active measures campaigns and interference in the 2016 U.S. election affirms both the intelligence community's assessment from January 2017 and the special counsel's investigation.

The committee—again, on a bipartisan basis—concluded that, in their words, “Russia's targeting of the 2016 U.S. presidential election was part of a broader, sophisticated, and ongoing information warfare campaign. . . .”

From these assessments and reports, we have been able to reveal aspects of

the Kremlin's playbook. In the 2018 midterm elections, the government took steps, in coordination with the social media companies, to disrupt Kremlin and Kremlin-linked information warfare operations. As a nation, we have never undertaken a collective examination, as we did after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, to understand what happened and how we should reorganize ourselves, our government, and our society to prevent it from ever happening again.

To make matters worse, the findings of the special counsel's report, a detailed accounting of how Kremlin and Kremlin-linked actors attacked our democracy, have been obfuscated with a partisan spin by President Trump and his allies. This absence of a comprehensive nonpartisan assessment and the President's lack of seriousness has implications for our national security as we prepare for the 2020 elections.

Equally troubling, the President has consciously or unconsciously embraced themes peddled as part of Russia's information warfare operations on the campaign trail, while serving as President, including comments over the summer that our elections are rigged and that there were illegal votes cast in so-called “blue” States.

Not only does the President give the impression that he is unbothered by this interference of 2016, he appears to be openly asking for help in 2020 and willing to leverage the power of his office to get that assistance. You only have to look as far as his phone conversation with the Ukrainian President where he asked for a favor in return for the delivery of defensive weapons to counter Russian aggression or the President publicly inviting China to start an investigation into the Biden family moments after he discussed trade talks with Beijing and threatened that “if they don't do what we want, we have tremendous power.” He told the world as much in a June interview with ABC News when he said that he doesn't see anything wrong with taking help for his political campaign, including from a foreign adversary. He is broadcasting to the world that he is willing to throw the interests of the United States overboard if it means helping with his reelection prospects.

These statements also have the intended or unintended effect of furthering Russian disinformation campaigns, including that our democracy is corrupt or fraudulent. These incidents and others I will discuss today are part of a troubling pattern of behavior and must be called out for what they are. They are wrong.

The President's troubling behavior, coupled with his inability or unwillingness to lead an effective policy to counter and deter this type of malign foreign influence, is to the peril of our national security and the integrity of our democracy. We cannot allow this course to continue uncorrected.

In order to further understand these dynamics and what to do to counter

them, I will highlight three aspects of the Russian information warfare playbook that we can anticipate will be deployed in 2020. The first aspect is supporting candidates likely to advance Kremlin strategic interests; the second aspect is undermining the credibility of the elections; and the third aspect is the recruiting of local surrogates to wittingly or unwittingly advance the Kremlin's agenda.

For each aspect, I will also explain how the Trump campaign, wittingly or not, embraced that tactic. I will then offer four recommendations for near-term steps to defend ourselves from foreign adversaries who seek to interfere with our fundamental institutions.

A central objective of Russian election interference efforts is supporting candidates that advance Kremlin strategic interests. For the 2016 Presidential election, Russia assessed that a Trump Presidency would advance their interests, and Kremlin and Kremlin-linked actors deployed information warfare and malign influence campaigns to aid then-Candidate Trump.

The intelligence community unanimously assessed in January 2017—again in their words—“Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the U.S. Presidential election to denigrate Secretary Clinton and harm her electability and potential Presidency. Putin and the Russian government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump.”

The recent report by the Senate Intelligence Committee—again, on a bipartisan basis—arrived at the even stronger conclusion that the Kremlin-linked troll organization’s “social media activity was overtly and almost invariably supportive of then candidate Trump, and to the detriment of Secretary Clinton’s campaign.”

Similarly, the special counsel’s report confirmed that Russian operations aimed to bolster their favored candidate, concluding that “[t]he Russian government perceived it would benefit from a Trump Presidency and worked to secure that outcome.” The report described in detail how Russia’s two main information warfare operations—the manipulation of social media and the hacking and dissemination of stolen information—“favored Presidential candidate Donald J. Trump and disparaged Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.”

With regard to the manipulation of social media, the February 2018 indictment by the special counsel of the Kremlin-linked troll organization, commonly known as the Internet Research Agency, provided additional evidence of how operations aimed to bolster specific candidates. The indictment showed Kremlin-linked trolls were instructed to “use any opportunity to criticize Hillary and the rest (except Sanders and Trump—we support them).”

The other main Russian information warfare effort was carried out by the Russian military intelligence units, or

GRU, which stole private information and disseminated it, including on social media, to damage Secretary Clinton.

The Senate Intelligence Committee’s recent report confirmed this tactic, assessing that “information acquired by the committee from intelligence oversight, social media companies, the special counsel’s investigative findings, and research by the commercial cyber security companies all reflect the Russian government’s use of GRU to carry out another vector of attack on the 2016 election: the dissemination of hacked materials.”

One of the ways that the GRU was able to amplify its ability to disseminate the hacked material was by collaborating with WikiLeaks. The special counsel’s report found that “in order to expand its interference in the 2016 presidential election, the GRU units transferred many of the documents they stole from the [Democratic National Committee, or the] DNC, and the chairman of the Clinton campaign to WikiLeaks.”

It must be noted that the special counsel, as well as our intelligence community, have established that the organization WikiLeaks was not just acting as an unwitting stooge for the Russians. WikiLeaks had a role in the amplification of these information warfare operations. The special counsel’s indictment from July of 2018 stated that GRU officers, posing as the fake persona Guccifer 2.0 “discussed the release of the stolen documents and the timing of those releases” with WikiLeaks “to heighten their impact on the 2016 Presidential election.” The special counsel’s report further described how “as reports attributing the DNC and DCCC hacks to the Russian Government emerged, WikiLeaks and [WikiLeaks founder Julian] Assange made several public statements designed to obscure the source of the materials that WikiLeaks was releasing.” The weaponization of this information stolen by the GRU units through WikiLeaks was an important aspect of the Kremlin’s support to then-Candidate Trump and heightened the impact of these operations against our elections.

The special counsel’s report detailed a third line of effort to advance Russia’s preferred candidate. The information warfare campaigns were conducted in coordination with outreach to the Trump campaign from Kremlin and Kremlin-linked individuals. These overtures included “offers of assistance to the [Trump] campaign.” That is a quote from the special counsel’s report.

In contrast, the special counsel’s office found no parallel efforts of assistance directed toward Secretary Clinton’s Presidential campaign and, in fact, found the opposite. With regard to the manipulation of social media by Kremlin-linked trolls, the special counsel’s report stated that “by February 2016 internal [Internet Research Agency] documents referred to support for

the Trump Campaign and opposition to candidate Clinton,” and further states that “throughout 2016 the [Internet Research Agency] accounts published an increasing number of materials supporting the Trump Campaign and opposing the Clinton Campaign.” The special counsel’s February 2018 indictment of the Internet Research Agency described additional efforts to oppose the Clinton campaign, including information warfare campaigns across social media platforms designed to peel off certain groups that are traditionally identified as reliable Democratic Party voters. The indictment stated: “In or around the latter half of 2016, the [Internet Research Agency] began to encourage U.S. minority groups not to vote in the 2016 U.S. presidential election or to vote for a third party presidential candidate.” The recent Senate Intelligence Committee report also affirmed this finding, concluding that no single group was targeted more than African Americans.

Let me emphasize again that this Senate report was a bipartisan effort.

President Putin all but confirmed support for the Trump campaign while standing next to the President in July of 2018 at the Helsinki Summit. When asked by the press if he wanted Trump to win the election and whether he directed any Kremlin officials to help with these efforts, Putin replied: “Yes, I did, because he talked about bringing the U.S. Russia relationship back to normal.” I think in this instance—and I think it is rare—we should take Putin’s word for it.

Equally disturbing, the special counsel provided significant evidence that President Trump and his associates embraced, encouraged, and applauded Russian support. The special counsel’s report definitively concludes that Russia saw its interests as aligned with and served by a Trump Presidency, that the central purpose of the Russian interference operations was helping the Trump campaign, and that the Trump campaign anticipated benefiting from the fruits of that foreign election interference.

The special counsel’s report detailed evidence showing how Trump embraced Russian information warfare campaigns that sought to help him and damage his opponent. The evidence is overwhelming that the Trump campaign encouraged this interference in the Presidential campaign, even as it became increasingly apparent that Russia was behind these attacks on our democracy.

One example of embracing Kremlin and Kremlin-linked help is Trump campaign associates, including the President’s son-in-law and then-campaign chairman, meeting with Russian agents in the hopes of getting dirt on Secretary Clinton. The email to set up the meeting to Donald Trump, Jr., held the Kremlin’s intentions plain as day. The offer was, and I quote, “to provide the Trump campaign with some official documents and information that would

incriminate Hillary and her dealings with Russia and would be useful to your father" as "part of Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump." Trump Junior embraced this offer and responded that, quote, "if it's what you say, I love it." I think that response from the President's son speaks for itself.

Yet another example of this behavior was the Trump campaign's promotion of WikiLeaks releases of information stolen by GRU. The special counsel's investigation showed that "the Presidential campaign showed interest in the WikiLeaks releases of documents and welcomed their potential damage to candidate Clinton."

On June 14, 2016, the Washington Post reported that "Russian government hackers" were behind the hacking of the DNC and DCCC. So it was likely that as of mid-June of 2016 the Trump campaign had a good idea that the stolen information distributed by WikiLeaks about the DNC was stolen by Russia. The Mueller report described that "by the late summer of 2016, the Trump Campaign was planning a press strategy, a communications campaign and messaging based on the possible release of Clinton emails by WikiLeaks." By October 7, the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence issued a joint statement naming the WikiLeaks disclosures as "consistent with the methods and motivations of Russian-directed efforts" to influence public opinion and were "intended to interfere with the U.S. election process." If not prior to the release of that joint statement, certainly by that point, the President's campaign should have known better. Instead, they appeared willing to embrace the Russian information warfare campaigns aimed at damaging their opponent.

The special counsel's January indictment of longtime Trump associate Roger Stone further details how Trump associates sought information about WikiLeaks releases of stolen materials intended to damage Secretary Clinton. That indictment stated: "A senior Trump campaign official was directed to contact Stone about any additional releases and . . . other damaging information [WikiLeaks] had regarding the Clinton campaign." That indictment also showed that on October 7, 2016—a half-hour after the joint statement by DHS and ODNI that WikiLeaks was part of Russia's operation to interfere with U.S. Presidential elections—WikiLeaks disseminated the first set of emails from Clinton chairman John Podesta. In response to those releases, "an associate of the high-ranking Trump campaign official sent a text message to Stone that read 'well done.'" Trump campaign associates applauded the actions by WikiLeaks, which Trump's then-CIA Director later labeled "a non-state hostile intelligence service often abetted by state actors like Russia." Instead of calling

the FBI, the campaign celebrated. In the last month of the campaign alone, the President publicly boasted of his love of WikiLeaks at least 124 times.

Embracing WikiLeaks is not the only example of the President's problematic embrace of Russian information warfare operations. The President appears to have welcomed the GRU's hacking operation and its intention to damage his opponent's candidacy. On July 27, 2016, Trump announced publicly during a press conference:

Russia, if you are listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing. I think you will be rewarded mightily by our press.

The special counsel's report confirmed that the GRU tried to assist Trump with those efforts, finding that "within approximately five hours of Trump's statement, GRU officers targeted for the first time Clinton's personal office."

This call for Russia to hack his political opponent and find her so-called deleted emails was not an isolated remark or sarcasm, as the President likes to say. The special counsel's report detailed that during the same period:

Trump asked individuals affiliated with his campaign to find the deleted emails. Michael Flynn . . . recalled that Trump made this request repeatedly and Flynn subsequently contacted multiple people in an effort to obtain the emails.

Further, as described in the special counsel's report, one of the people General Flynn contacted to obtain Secretary Clinton's alleged deleted emails claimed that he had organized meetings with parties whom he believed "had ties and affiliations with Russia," though the special counsel's investigation was not able to establish that Flynn's contacts interacted with Kremlin-linked hackers. As Brookings Institution senior fellow Benjamin Wittes laid out in April, Trump "not only called publicly on the Russians to deliver the dirt on his opponent but he also privately ordered his campaign to seek the material out . . . knowing . . . that Russia would or might be the source."

As I mentioned earlier, the special counsel was not able to find sufficient evidence to prove that the Trump campaign's embracing of Kremlin or Kremlin-linked operations constituted a crime beyond a reasonable doubt, but, clearly, the special counsel established a breadth of episodes where Trump embraced Russian operations in support of the campaign. Maybe those acts don't meet a criminal standard, but there are significant implications for this behavior. For instance, is it OK for a candidate to get elected President or elected to any public office by capitalizing on information stolen by a foreign adversary? Will that be acceptable the next time around? Will foreign campaigns targeting our elections be accepted as normal from now on? The actions of President Trump indicate, unfortunately, that it is acceptable and

even welcome, and that is to the detriment of our national security and the integrity of our democracy.

I would like now to highlight a second aspect of the Kremlin's playbook, operations to denigrate the legitimacy of U.S. elections and democratic processes in general. The January 2017 intelligence community assessment found that one of the main objectives of the Kremlin-ordered election interference campaign was to undermine the American public's faith in our electoral system. The intelligence community's assessed in January 2017: "When it appeared to Moscow that Secretary Clinton was likely to win the presidency, the Russian influence campaign focused more on undercutting Secretary Clinton's legitimacy . . . including by impugning the fairness of the election." The intelligence community's assessment further stated that "Pro-Kremlin bloggers had prepared a Twitter campaign, #DemocracyRIP, on election night in anticipation of Secretary Clinton's victory."

The special counsel's work confirmed the intelligence community's assessment. The Mueller report showed significant evidence of how the Kremlin-linked troll organization the Internet Research Agency deployed information operations around the theme that the election was rigged, fraudulent, or otherwise corrupt. The special counsel's indictment of Internet Research Agency officials from February 2018 stated: "Starting in or around the summer of 2016, [the Kremlin-linked troll organization] also began to promote allegations of voter fraud by the Democratic Party through their fictitious U.S. personas and groups on social media." The Kremlin-linked troll organization purchased advertisements on Facebook to further promote allegations of vote rigging, including ads promoting a Facebook post that charged "Hillary Clinton has already committed voter fraud during the Democratic Iowa Caucus." Other examples include posts that voter fraud allegations were being investigated in North Carolina on the Internet Research Agency's fraudulent Twitter account @TEN_GOP, which claimed to be the Tennessee Republican Party. Just days before the election, the agency used the same fraudulent Twitter handle to push the message "#VoterFraud by counting tens of thousands of ineligible mail in Hillary votes being reported in Broward County, Florida."

Consciously or unconsciously, President Trump also embraced this tactic from the Russian information warfare playbook and ran with it. According to a New York Times compilation, Trump tweeted at least 28 times during the 2016 Presidential campaign that the election, the electoral process, or certain early voting procedures were rigged, fraudulent, and corrupt. Let me give you a few examples. On August 1, 2016, Trump told a rally in Ohio: "I'm afraid the election is going to be rigged, I have to be honest." On September 6, 2016, he stated: "The only

way I can lose in my opinion . . . is if cheating goes on . . . go down to certain areas and study [to] make sure that other people don't come in and vote five times.” Multiple press reports indicate that Trump’s campaign website invited supporters to serve as “Trump election observers” to help him “stop crooked Hilary from rigging the election.” At the final debate on October 19, 2016, Trump indicated he would not necessarily accept the results of the election, instead saying he would “look at it at that time,” alleging “millions of people” on the voter rolls “shouldn’t be registered to vote.”

At an Ohio rally the next day, Trump alleged that Secretary Clinton “is a candidate who is truly capable of anything, including voter fraud.” On October 21, 2016, Trump told a rally in Pennsylvania:

Remember, folks, it is a rigged system. That’s why you’ve got to get out and vote. You’ve got to watch. Because this system is totally rigged.

In these instances and others, Trump furthered the Kremlin’s disinformation campaign by embracing and promoting the themes that our democratic system was rigged. As New Yorker journalist Jonathan Blitzer observed at that time, “Trump has taken . . . [the voter fraud] concept to the extreme: trying to delegitimize a national election even while campaigning for the presidency.”

It is wildly irresponsible to push conspiracy theories that threaten the integrity of our democratic system without any evidence. It is wrong when a candidate for President pushes conspiracy theories that advance a central theme of the Russian information warfare campaign that our electoral system is “rigged” and aids key strategic objectives of the Kremlin. These tactics also undermine the American public’s faith in our electoral system and strengthen Putin’s position in the strategic competition between the United States and Russia. It is unpatriotic and cannot be accepted as part of our democracy and open society.

The mere idea that our entire election system would be attacked by the Russians to delegitimize it, and then to have those efforts echoed by the President does a huge disservice to the American public. If the American public does not have faith in the integrity of our electoral system, then we have profoundly lost a fundamental principle of our government that thousands of Americans have defended over years and years of effort. Our elections have to be protected. They can’t be denigrated. The denigration that we saw was outrageous.

These two aspects of the Kremlin’s playbook are supported by a third aspect—the recruitment and exploitation of local surrogates. This process was described in an amicus brief from December 2017 filed against President Trump by former national security officials, including Director of National Intelligence Clapper, CIA and NSA Di-

rector Hayden, CIA Director Brennan, and Acting CIA Director Morell. The brief stated:

The Russian Government continues to use local actors in a number of ways, [including] to get closer to a target (especially one who would be hesitant to offer assistance to Russian operatives directly), or manipulate a target to suit their needs. They use these agents to probe individual targets to see if they might be open to relationships or blackmail. And they recruit individuals within a country to help them understand how to appeal to U.S. populations and target and shape the contours of disinformation campaigns.

The recent Senate Intelligence Committee report affirmed these tactics, explaining: “Russian backed trolls pushing disinformation have also sought to connect with and potentially coopt individuals to take action in the real world.”

The special counsel’s report described how the Kremlin and Kremlin-linked actors deployed these tactics in the United States to interfere in the 2016 election, including:

As early as 2014, the [Internet Research Agency] instructed its employees to target U.S. persons to advance its operational goals. Initially, recruitment focused on U.S. persons who could amplify content posted by the [Internet Research Agency].

However, the activities that the Kremlin-troll agency, wittingly or unwittingly, used Americans for grew over time to include assistance with organizing pro-Trump rallies and demonstrations. The special counsel’s related indictment of the Internet Research Agency officials stated that by late August 2016, the Internet Research Agency had an internal list “of over 100 real U.S. persons contacted through [Internet Research Agency]-controlled false U.S. persona accounts and tracked to monitor recruitment efforts and requests.” These efforts to exploit local surrogates included two different types of interactions with the Trump campaign according to the special counsel—reposting Kremlin-linked troll content from social media and requests for assistance with organizing political rallies.

This aspect of the Kremlin playbook—recruitment and exploitation of local surrogates—was also embraced, consciously or unconsciously, by the President and his inner circle. The special counsel’s report detailed how Trump’s family and campaign associates retweeted Kremlin-linked troll organization posts, amplifying a foreign adversary’s information warfare campaign against our Presidential election. The special counsel found: “Posts from the [Internet Research Agency]-controlled Twitter account @TEN_GOP were cited or retweeted by multiple Trump campaign officials and surrogates, including Donald J. Trump Jr, Eric Trump, Kellyanne Conway, Brad Parscale, and Michael T. Flynn.” The posts these campaign surrogates cited or retweeted included two other aspects of the information warfare campaign—accusations to damage Sec-

retary Clinton’s campaign and allegations of voter fraud.

With regards to this aspect, as well, the special counsel did not conclude there was enough evidence to establish that the embrace and amplification of these information warfare operations was willful coordination by the Trump campaign amounting to a criminal conspiracy. It may well be that the President and the people around him didn’t know that at @TEN_GOP wasn’t the Tennessee Republican Party but was, in fact, Russian trolls thousands of miles away, fraudulently pumping disinformation into our system. However, it still shows a willingness to embrace for partisan advantage baseless, unsubstantiated allegations from unknown sources threatening the very fabric of our democracy—claims we know now were ginned up by a foreign adversary. It may not be criminal, but it is incredibly reckless and wrong. It is not the standard of conduct we should demand from someone seeking political office and the public trust that goes with that office. Again, this is part of a troubling pattern of behavior by the President.

Equally important, the election of a President who consciously or unconsciously embraces the tactics of foreign disinformation operations has implications for our national security and that of our allies and partners. As Benjamin Wittes from the Brookings Institution assessed, that the Internet Research Agency, a Kremlin-linked troll organization, “was able to . . . get Trump figures—including Trump himself—to engage with and promote social-media content as part of a hostile power’s covert efforts to influence the American electorate . . . shows a troubling degree of vulnerability on the part of the U.S. political system to outside influence campaigns.

Now, unfortunately, we can anticipate that these aspects of the playbook will continue and escalate in sophistication and scale in 2020. The 2016 election was not just a one-off operation for the Kremlin. As then-Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats warned, Russia’s malign activities “are persistent, they are pervasive, and they are meant to undermine America’s democracy.”

FBI Director Chris Wray also emphasized similar concerns during his spring speech to the Council on Foreign Relations, stating that the threat from Russian foreign malign influence “is not just an election cycle threat; it’s pretty much a 365-days-a-year threat.” Director Wray further warned that “our adversaries are going to keep adapting and upping their game.”

The intelligence community assessed in January 2017 that the campaign against us represented a “new normal” in Russian influence efforts in which “Moscow will apply lessons learned from its campaign aimed at the U.S. presidential elections to future influence efforts in the U.S. and worldwide.”

The recent Senate Intelligence Committee's report concluded that information warfare attacks in 2016 "represent only the latest installment in an increasingly brazen interference by the Kremlin on citizens and democratic institutions of the United States." And Director Mueller told the House Intelligence Committee in July that Russian interference "wasn't a single attempt. They're doing it as we sit here."

This interference has only increased in sophistication as the Russians used lessons learned from tactics developed in the Kremlin playbook in 2016. We saw Kremlin and Kremlin-linked actors deploy information warfare campaigns designed to advance their preferred candidates in the 2018 elections.

An October 2018 Department of Justice indictment from the Eastern District of Virginia detailed information warfare operations in 2017 and 2018 by the Internet Research Agency leveraged to promote candidates aligned with President Trump and denigrate candidates opposed to him, including anti-Trump Republicans. These operations demonstrated a high level of precision and specificity in messaging for the Agency's employees to deploy, including references to relevant news articles and topical items of the day to optimally promote Russia's candidates and causes of choice.

For example, the indictment cited how managers of the Internet Research Agency provided employees a news article titled "Civil War if Trump Taken Down" and instructed them to use their fraudulent personas to "[n]ame those who oppose the President and those who impede his efforts to implement his preelection promises." One of the targets of these efforts was anti-Trump Republicans. The trolling instructions included detailed talking points to deploy over social media platforms, including "focus on the fact that the Anti-Trump Republicans: a) drag their feet with regard to financing the construction of the border wall; b) are not lowering taxes; c) slander Trump and harm his reputation (bring up McCain); d) do not want to cancel ObamaCare; e) are not in a hurry to adopt laws that oppose the refugees coming from Middle Eastern countries entering this country."

This information warfare operation was designed to support the President and detailed a sophisticated campaign deployed against an unwitting American public by trolls pretending to be fellow citizens. As national security journalist Natasha Bertrand wrote in The Atlantic about the 2018 information warfare campaigns detailed in the Eastern District's indictment, "[t]he messaging strategy mimicked the overheated rhetoric . . . that [the Internet Research Agency] employed to considerable effect during the Presidential election. The partisan—and at times hateful—comments so artfully mimicked the daily back and forth on social media that they seemed to be those of real Americans."

She also observed how these messages supported the President, noting that "[a]t times, the messaging copied President Trump's bombast almost verbatim" and "the echo chamber between Trump's election rhetoric and that of the Russian trolls was striking."

And the Russian information operations were not limited only to supporting President Trump. The Eastern District of Virginia indictment also showed how the Kremlin-linked troll organization worked to advance Republican challengers of several congressional races through a fraudulent Twitter account called @CovfefeNationUS, which encouraged readers to contribute to a political action committee seeking to defeat incumbent Democratic Senators and Representatives in the 2018 midterm election. These operations demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the American political system.

We also saw evidence from the 2018 midterms of a second tactic from the Kremlin's playbook that I discussed earlier, attacking the legitimacy of the election, which is a fundamental attack on the democracy of this country—the ethic that holds us together. Here, too, the operation evolved in sophistication. In the same indictment, the Eastern District of Virginia described information warfare operations that worked to undermine the legitimacy of the U.S. election, with specific messages for its employees to disseminate. One example from the indictment was instructions for the Russian Internet Research Agency's employees to cite specific online articles on voter fraud. The Kremlin-linked trolls were told the state in deployed messages:

Remind that the majority of "blue States" have no voter IDs, which suggests that large scale falsifications are bound to be happening there. . . . Democrats in the coming election will surely attempt to falsify the results.

The indictment also detailed how these information warfare campaigns were deployed across multiple platforms, including being pushed out using multiple fraudulent Twitter accounts to reinforce and amplify their message.

Finally, we saw the continuation of a third aspect of the Russian playbook, the recruitment of local surrogates to advance Kremlin interests with the 2018 election. As the Eastern Virginia's indictment states, between March 2016 and around July 2017, "while concealing its true identity, location, and purpose, the [Kremlin-linked troll organization] used the false U.S. persona 'Helen Christoperson' to contact individuals and groups in the United States to promote protests, rallies, and marches, including by funding advertising, flyers, and rallies and supplies."

The indictment further details how the Kremlin-linked troll organization used a different fake persona "while concealing its true identity, location, and purpose, to solicit at least one person presumed to be located in the

United States to assist with . . . social media activities." These efforts to recruit surrogates included posting on and managing content on a fraudulent Facebook page created specially to further a Russian information warfare campaign.

As we have been warned, these operations will continue to look more American, and the Kremlin and Kremlin-linked agents will continue to try to recruit people in the United States to advance Russia's hybrid operations.

Many of the President's national security officials have warned that we could see heightened Russian information warfare attacks and other influence operations in the 2020 elections. Even before the 2018 midterm elections, Christopher Krebs, Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency Director, warned:

The midterm is . . . just the warm-up, or the exhibition game. . . . The big game, we think, for adversaries is probably 2020.

FBI Director Wray echoed that assessment, stating this spring that the "2018 elections were seen as a dress rehearsal for the big show in 2020" and that the FBI anticipates the 2020 threat being even more challenging.

Former Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats testified to the Senate Intelligence Committee in late January: "Moscow may employ additional influence toolkits—such as spreading disinformation, conducting hack-and-leak operations, or manipulating data—in a more targeted fashion to influence U.S. policy, actions, and elections."

There are several examples which further demonstrate how these efforts have become more sophisticated and pervasive. In 2016, Russia disseminated what turned out to be authentic stolen information. However, just a few months later, during the French Presidential elections, Kremlin and Kremlin-linked actors disseminated a mix of real and fake information about Presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron in order to damage him and bolster their preferred candidate, Marine Le Pen. So next time foreign adversaries may use a mixture of real and fake information as part of their influence operations.

We already saw a multi-country, multi-language information warfare campaign uncovered by the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab that made use of "fake accounts, forged documents, and dozens of online platforms to spread stories that attacked western interests and unity."

It may also be harder to discern what is real and what is fake because it is more likely to look like it is coming from regular Americans who are concerned about an issue. In February 2018, Russia expert Heather Conley warned in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Cybersecurity that Russian information warfare campaigns in 2018 and 2020 will adapt and "look more American, [and] it will look less Russian."

In addition, new technologies, including the use of artificial intelligence

and deepfake recordings that seem real but are actually doctored or entirely fabricated, will add an additional layer of complexity and make it easier for us to fall for these operations. As then-Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats testified to the Senate Intelligence Committee in late January, “Adversaries and strategic competitors probably will attempt to use deep fakes or similar machine-learning technologies to create convincing but false image, audio, and video files to augment influence campaigns directed against the United States and our allies and partners.”

Despite these assessments by our senior national security officials and our intelligence community, the voluminous evidence in the special counsel’s indictments and report, additional indictments from the Department of Justice, and bipartisan reports from the Senate Intelligence Committee, the President appears unwilling or unable to recognize the urgency of this national security threat or the need to immediately implement a comprehensive strategy to counter and deter Russian hybrid warfare. Instead of alerting Americans to the threat, the President continues to ignore the analysis of his own intelligence agencies. Instead of leading efforts to deter foreign adversaries, the President, with the whole world watching at the July 2019 G20 Osaka summit, treated election interference as a joke, signaling to Putin that he would not hold Russia accountable.

This doesn’t only apply to past Russian interference in the 2016 election. The President’s blind spot when it comes to Russian election interference is harming our ability to counter future interference. The New York Times reported in April that former Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen was told not to bring up the issue with the President of expected Russian interference in the 2020 election. Acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney said it “wasn’t a great subject and should be kept below [the President’s] level.”

The President’s unwillingness to accept Russian interference and his public statements inviting other countries to interfere in future elections have created real impediments to formulating a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society strategy to counter and deter Russia or others from attacking our elections. Despite almost 3 years having passed since the 2016 election, the White House has not led efforts to develop a comprehensive strategy to counter foreign election interference. While, as I mentioned, individual U.S. Departments and agencies took steps to disrupt Russia in the 2018 midterm elections, no wholesale strategy to deter and counter these operations appears to have been implemented for 2020.

Don’t just take my word for it. Then-European Commander General Curtis Scaparrotti, who was on the frontlines

in deterring Russia, testified this spring to the Senate Committee on Armed Services that U.S. efforts to counter Russian influence operations still lacked “effective unification across the interagency.” Equally troubling was his assessment that the United States has yet to develop “a multifaceted strategy to counter Russia.”

When FBI Director Christopher Wray testified in May before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, he could not identify a lead person who was designated to coordinate these efforts. This is despite a provision included in the fiscal year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act requiring the President to designate an NSC official to be in charge of coordinating the U.S. Government response to malign foreign influence operations. To date, no such coordinator has been named. Moreover, the cybersecurity coordinator at the NSC was dismissed over a year and a half ago, and that position remains unfilled. So, at the highest levels, we don’t have anyone in charge.

What additional steps can we take right now to protect the American people against interference campaigns by the Russians and other foreign adversaries—campaigns we know are coming ahead of the 2020 elections?

In the near term, I believe we must immediately adopt several measures that would provide additional tools to detect these information warfare operations and help reduce the American people’s vulnerability to them. We have no time to waste.

First, we must designate the Secretary of Homeland Security, with the concurrence of the Director of National Intelligence and the FBI Director, with the responsibility for increasing public vigilance and reassuring the American people about the legitimacy and validity of our elections.

This group of senior officials should be organized to detect foreign interference in our political process and expose malign behavior, including on social media. In the run-up to the election, this group must issue monthly public reports—with a classified annex, if necessary—showing top trends in malign influence campaigns from countries identified as posing the greatest threats. They also must provide a public assessment as to whether these countries are engaged in interference in our election 90 days prior to election day and again 30 days out. Making such an assessment a requirement and including a delivery date will help inoculate these assessments from questions about political bias.

Even after election day, we need to make sure this group is poised to affirm the legitimacy of the democratic process. No less than 3 days after the election, it must also make an assessment to the maximum extent possible as to whether foreign interference was detected. To further protect the group

from accusations of political bias, the spot assessment could be backed up by a neutral, nonpartisan panel, which would review and certify the government’s assessment in short order, such as within 2 weeks.

These types of public assessments are not unprecedented. As I mentioned earlier, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Department of Homeland Security made an announcement about Russian influence operations ahead of the 2016 election. Ahead of the 2018 midterm elections, the Director of National Intelligence, the Department of Justice, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security made a public statement about foreign influence, and the President issued an Executive order regarding election interference ahead of the 2018 midterm elections, which requires a 45-day report after the election that assesses attacks from foreign adversaries. Yet these sporadic statements are not enough to reassure the American people, and a report 45 days after the election is much too long to wait. The public must know that this group is going to keep us informed in real time and issue warnings regarding the threats.

Much of this idea was endorsed as a recommendation in the recent bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee’s report, which called for the executive branch to stand up a task force to continually monitor and assess the use of social media platforms by foreign countries for “democratic interference” that, among other things, would “periodically advise Congress and the public on its findings.”

Second, we need a better understanding of how the Kremlin and other foreign adversaries are deploying disinformation and foreign influence operations across social media platforms. Right now, we are depending on social media companies to take down unauthentic accounts that are engaged in malign influence activities. These companies have stepped up their efforts to identify and counter these activities, which is something they failed to do in the 2016 election. Ultimately, they are for-profit enterprises, and the government’s visibility on and understanding trends and indicators of foreign activity on these platforms is limited. We cannot solely rely on the social media companies to look after the public good and protect our national security.

One way to increase transparency and help the American public understand the changing threat picture across social media platforms would be greater support for independent research, with the participation of the social media companies and independent third-party researchers, to compile information and analyze trends that are relevant to foreign information operations. Such research would allow trusted independent researchers and academics to gain insight into cross-platform trends and

provide analysis of indicators of foreign influence activities to the public. This mechanism could also provide an important tool for informing our government's response to foreign influence and disinformation operations ahead of the 2020 elections. This concept also has bipartisan support from the Senate Intelligence Committee, which includes a similar recommendation in its recent report.

We have proof that this concept works and is vital to national security. General Paul Nakasone, commander of U.S. Cyber Command, publicly testified to both the Senate Armed Services and Intelligence Committees that two analyses of Kremlin-linked influence operations across social media platforms done by independent researchers at the Senate Intelligence Committee's behest were, in his words, a very, very helpful window into the adversary's operations ahead of the 2018 midterms. As our adversaries continue to evolve and adopt their techniques, we need to redouble our efforts to understand what to expect in the next election.

Third, we must reinforce the prohibition on candidates and campaigns that accept offers of help from foreign adversaries who interfere in our political process to advance their strategic interests.

The Trump campaign's series of foreign contacts in the 2016 election and the President's continued statements to solicit and show his willingness to accept assistance from foreign governments make it clear that Congress must act to prevent future interference efforts. That is why I am a cosponsor of S. 1562, the Foreign Influence Reporting in Elections Act—or the FIRE Act—introduced by Senator WARNER. The FIRE Act would require all campaign officials to report within 1 week to the Federal Election Commission any contacts with foreign nationals attempting to make campaign donations or otherwise collaborate with the campaign. The FEC would, in turn, have to notify the FBI within 1 week.

It is in all of our interests to ensure that we can defend against foreign attacks on our democratic institutions, and reporting these kinds of contacts to the appropriate authorities is our first line of defense. I am disappointed that my Republican colleagues have blocked Senator WARNER's attempt to pass the FIRE Act even after many of them insisted that politicians should report to the FBI any contacts or offers of help by a foreign government.

Fourth, we should build upon the passage in the Senate of S. 1328, the Defending Elections against Trolls from Enemy Regimes Act. This bipartisan legislation by Senators DURBIN and GRAHAM was a step in the right direction by making improper interference in U.S. elections a violation of immigration law and violators both deportable and ineligible for visas to enter the United States. Additional targeted sanctions should be considered on Russia to deter future election

interference with our allies and partners.

These are some immediate steps we can take as the Russian playbook for the 2020 election crystallizes, but we can also see a familiar pattern beginning to emerge.

This is not hypothetical. Just yesterday, Facebook announced it took down 50 accounts associated with the Internet Research Agency. I have spoken about it consistently throughout my comments this evening.

Just yesterday, they took down 50 accounts. These Kremlin-linked trolls posed as real Americans, including from swing States. They deployed information operations on social media to praise President Trump and Senator SANDERS and attack Vice President Biden and Senators WARREN and HARRIS—repeating tactics from 2016 and 2018.

Facebook's head of cyber security stated in conjunction with that announcement that we can guarantee "bad guys are going to keep trying to do this." This is just one more confirmation that Russia is deploying aspects of the same playbook in 2020.

This time, we know this information warfare campaign is coming. In fact, it has already begun. We need to build on what we have learned and what we anticipate coming next. We should be ensuring that we have structures in place to counter foreign election interference. Importantly, we must work together with private partners to expose more of these operations and continue to help the American people understand it. We can speak the truth about how Russia is exploiting our democracy and open society to deploy its malign influence playbook so the public is not caught unaware of these sophisticated foreign tactics and attempts to manipulate the social media environment.

We also cannot continue to let these moments pass without speaking up about the tenets of our democracy and what it stands for. Russia exploited vulnerabilities in our society, and their tactics were encouraged and amplified by a candidate who was seeking the highest office in the land. That candidate, now President, appears to see no reason to change his behavior for the future and instead he has doubled down.

Congress as a body and we as a country must speak out and say this is not acceptable. It is not acceptable for candidates for political office—any political office, those seeking to hold a position of public trust, to seek to engage with our adversaries or foreign authoritarian regimes to advance their political campaigns. It is not acceptable to meet with foreign agents about getting stolen information on your opponents, information acquired by foreign espionage. It is not acceptable to promote materials stolen by foreign adversaries. It is not acceptable to abuse the power of the Presidency to advance your personal political interests to the detriment

of the country. It is not acceptable to promote propaganda and disinformation campaigns that work to delegitimize our democracy, a democracy that generations have fought and died to protect. This is a violation of the public trust that is inherent in any political office and which any candidate for public office must uphold to be worthy of the American people's support.

It is critical that we unite in a bipartisan manner to take immediate action to counter these threats. The integrity of our electoral system is not a Republican or a Democratic issue. It is an American issue.

As Abraham Lincoln said, "America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves."

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MCSALLY). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, the Senator from Alabama, Mr. JONES, and I have legislation that we propose to introduce tonight.

I am prepared to let him speak before I do because I understand he has another event, but I don't see him.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. ALEXANDER and Mr. JONES pertaining to the introduction of S. 2667 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

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

H.R. 3055

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, last evening, I was here at this exact spot asking my colleagues to support the idea of advancing appropriations bills, and I am pleased to see today that has today occurred. It occurred on a vote of 92 to 2. That is a good sign.

It is a goal of mine to see the Senate function. One of the ways we can determine whether we are doing our jobs is whether we can pass appropriations bills. The Senate is now considering 4 of 12 appropriations bills that should be adopted on an annual basis.

I begin my remarks this evening by thanking Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY for their leadership

and for working hard to bring appropriations bills to the floor, including my subcommittee's work on the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

As the chairman of that CJS Subcommittee, I worked closely with the ranking member, Senator SHAHEEN, the Senator from New Hampshire, whom I know very well. Senator SHAHEEN and I have worked together to produce a good-government, bipartisan bill that is part of this appropriations package we are now debating. I express my gratitude to her and her staff for her partnership, and I am proud we were able to report the bill out of the Appropriations Committee by a unanimous vote. I appreciate Senator SHAHEEN's willingness to find common ground, and I look forward to seeing this bill pass the Senate and ultimately be enacted into law.

As I have said before, this is a good bill. It is consistent with our subcommittee's 302(b) allocation, and I believe it balances the many competing priorities of our funding jurisdiction.

As you expect in a bill that is titled "Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies," there are many competing interests in determining how we allocate the spending within that 302(b) allocation.

The CJS bill supports activities related to national security; Federal, State, local, and Tribal law enforcement; space exploration; economic development; trade promotion and enforcement; scientific research; and many other critical government functions.

The CJS bill provides funding for the Department of Commerce, which includes an increase of significant amounts of dollars that are necessary in fiscal year 2020 to fund the Census Bureau to ensure that we have an accurate counting for the 2020 decennial census—a constitutional requirement. It is one of the reasons that it is difficult to allocate money in our bill, because the census is so critical and must be done in a professional and timely manner. We believe we have included the necessary support for that to occur.

This bill also has a strong support for NOAA programs—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—to ensure continuation of core operations, including ocean monitoring, fisheries management, coastal grants to States, aquaculture research, and severe weather forecasting, and additional opportunities for economic growth by supporting the Economic Development Agency and continuing the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program.

The CJS bill also supports space and scientific exploration. This bill is the bill that funds NASA. As many of my colleagues know, this year the administration took a step—a bold step—in advancing the timeframe by which American astronauts will return to the

Moon. The plan is now to return to the Moon by 2024. This bill helps accelerate that goal and will cement America's leadership in space exploration. The bill provides robust funding for NASA, including funding for science and aeronautics and the Artemis mission—that trip to the Moon—which will allow NASA to begin to take those important steps to achieve its goal—and a goal of mine—of putting the first woman on the Moon by 2024.

The bill also includes needed funding for STEM education programs.

In most recent times, when the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11 was celebrated, it caused me to remember back to the days in which many people in this country saw what we were able to accomplish and dedicated their lives—young people—to science and research, to space exploration. This bill is supportive of that and is designed to inspire the next generation of scientists—young people and others.

Finally, the CJS bill also provides for increased funding for the Department of Justice. The funding includes additional resources for the Department's law enforcement components, enabling the Department to hire additional agents, deputy marshals, and correctional officers, expanding the Department's efforts to combat mass violence and violent crime.

Funding for the Executive Office for Immigration Review is also increased so that additional immigration judges and support staff can be hired, continuing our committee's effort to reduce the immigration court backlog, which is now over 960,000.

Additionally, as an original sponsor of the First Step Act, I am proud that this bill provides \$75 million—the fully authorized level—to the Bureau of Prisons for its implementation.

Our bill provides \$2.3 billion in funding for State, local, and Tribal law enforcement assistance, including a total of \$517 million to combat the various opioid, meth, and substance abuse crises raging our communities, \$500 million for grants authorized under the Violence Against Women Act, and \$315 million for juvenile justice grants. These grants will help local communities prevent crime and also provide support and assistance for crime victims.

Unfortunately, many of our law enforcement officials are under significant stress, increasing pressures, and there is an increasing level of suicide among law enforcement officers across the country. Again, we have provided funding for counseling—something I wish were not necessary.

We have a transparent product here. We worked in a bipartisan manner, as many Kansans and Americans have asked me to do, asking: Can we get along? The answer is yes, we can get along to do something as basic as an appropriations bill. I hope the answer will continue to be yes. It is important for us to address the priorities and needs of our Nation.

I look forward to advancing this legislation. I will be here on the Senate floor from time to time to respond to my colleagues' questions and to respond to any amendments that may be offered.

I urge my colleagues to support this package of four bills, including our CJS bill, so that we can move one step closer to completing our constitutionally required work of funding the Federal Government.

I again thank Chairman SHELBY and the vice chairman, Senator LEAHY, for their leadership throughout this entire process. I look forward to working with them for the next few days and throughout the year to see that we have a successful conclusion.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—TREATY DOCUMENT NO. 116-1

MR. MORAN. Madam President as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's consent to the resolution of ratification with respect to treaty document No. 116-1.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

MR. MORAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

BUDGET ENFORCEMENT LEVELS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020

MR. ENZI. Madam President, section 251 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, BBEDCA, establishes statutory limits on discretionary spending and allows for various adjustments to those limits. In addition, sections 302 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 allow the chairman of the Budget Committee to establish and make revisions to allocations, aggregates, and levels consistent with those adjustments.

The Senate will soon consider S. Amdt. 948 to H.R. 3055, the Commerce, Justice, Science, Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, Interior, Environment, Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2020. The Senate amendment provides appropriations for spending within the jurisdiction of all the subcommittees in the underlying bill except for the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related