

have made a very real difference in the lives of a lot of families.

We will talk for years, quite frankly, about Dr. Lester Shaw and what he has done at A Pocket Full of Hope and how he has helped so many kids. He has, for years, mentored students and has had a 100-percent success rate, year after year after year, of just loving on kids and helping them in every way he can. Dr. Shaw has made a remarkable difference in our State.

We will talk for years about Clarence Hill and about what he has done for race relations in our State and how he is quietly bringing people together to sit down around a dinner table and develop friendships that should have existed long ago.

We will talk for years about Stephan Moore and his family, what they have done in the inner city, what they have done to pull kids out and look at them eyeball to eyeball and give them a sense of hope and a sense of joy.

See, in our State and around my city, Oklahoma City, where Frederick Douglass High School is, February is not just another month. We understand what Black history really means because we are living it with legacy-leavers like Ada Fisher and Clara Luper and so many others who have left such a mark.

I am proud to say I have neighbors and friends all around me who continue to make history in what they continue to do in our State. I am grateful to call them friends, and I am grateful we have the opportunity to celebrate Frederick Douglass's birthday together.

I yield back.

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.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MAKE CENTS ACT

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, there is really no way to sugarcoat it. Washington's budget process is broken. Every year, it is like clockwork. First, the President submits his budget, like we saw this past Monday. Then the House tears it up—no pun intended, really. They ultimately fail to pass their own budget, and then Congress kicks the can down the road before finally cramming through a budget-busting bill at the eleventh hour.

There is no question this process is dysfunctional, but maybe, more importantly, its lack of transparency allows for wasteful spending to continue year after year—unchecked.

Folks, this cycle has to end. We have to start chipping away at this ballooning debt, and we have to work toward cutting our government's most wasteful spending.

One of the best ways to do this is to call it out when we see it. As some of

you may know, every month, I give out my Squeal Award to call out the parts of our government that are wasting hard-working Americans' tax dollars. I highlight the most egregious waste found within the bowels of Washington, and then I put it forward and offer up a solution to stop it.

Take, for example, what I like to call the binge buying bureaucrats. Every year at the end of September, the bureaucrats charge billions of dollars to taxpayers during Washington's annual use-it-or-lose-it spending spree. We have seen the compulsive buying include items like millions and millions of dollars of lobster and crab. We have even seen spending on games and toys or even on something like a \$12,000 foosball table. Is that what we need in Washington, DC—foosball?

I have also called out Washington's boondoggles that are just bottomless money pits for projects that never really even get off the ground. As for the contractors who are working on these boondoggles, the ones who are failing at their jobs, guess what—they are getting big, fat bonuses.

A primary example of this egregious misuse of tax dollars is what I like to call the moondoggle. Right there. There you have it. Look at that—the moondoggle. I am talking about the rockets that are being developed for NASA's next Moon mission. This project is billions of dollars over budget and years—folks, not months but years—behind schedule due to poor performance. Yet NASA still handed out generous bonuses that totaled over \$300 million to the contractor who is working on the project.

Folks, it is absurd. This is absurd. We have to put an end to it, and thankfully I believe we might actually be on a path that will do that.

Taxpayers should be encouraged that all of this "squealing" has finally been heard at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. Both of these Squeal Award recipients—the binge buying bureaucrats and the infamous moondoggle—have been targeted by President Trump in his latest budget proposal.

Within its pages, the President states that his administration is committed to stopping improper end-of-year spending and will begin closely scrutinizing how money is being spent at the end of the fiscal year to curtail waste. The President's budget also calls out the poor performance of the NASA contractor and proposes management improvements that would shave \$300 million off the cost of the mission. This is encouraging, no doubt about it.

In order to codify these efforts, I am putting forward a package of common-sense reforms to join the President in urging Congress to actually address Washington's spending addiction, get our budget process back on track, and ensure Iowans understand exactly how their hard-earned dollars are being spent.

In order to force Congress to do its job and become a better steward of tax-

payers' money, I have introduced the MAKE CENTS Act. This comprehensive package combines five simple ideas I have previously introduced.

First off, it requires an annual report listing every government-funded project that is \$1 billion or more over budget or 5 years or more behind schedule.

Second, it requires every project supported with Federal funds to include a pricetag that is easily available for taxpayers.

Third, it eliminates use-it-or-lose-it impulse purchases by limiting an agency's spending in the last 2 months of the fiscal year to no more than the average spent in the other months.

Fourth, it prohibits Congress from going on recess without passing a budget on time.

Fifth and lastly, it prohibits Congress from getting paid without its passing a budget on time.

Folks, these are not new or radical reforms. Many folks in the Senate and in the House have proposed various versions of these items, recognizing the serious problem we face. Like the bill title reads, these ideas just make sense. If hard-working Iowa families have to manage their budgets, we really should expect Washington to do the same. So let's get at it.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF LEE COUNTY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today it is a privilege for me to join Kentuckians in Lee County in marking 150 years of their distinguished history. Found in Eastern Kentucky, where tall hills meet dense forests, Lee County is home to a special rural heritage. I would like to spend a few moments today to look back at the area's wonderful traditions and to celebrate its great potential for the future.

To fully understand Lee County's history, we must appreciate its geography. The county seat, Beattyville, sits at the birthplace of the beautiful Kentucky River. The Commonwealth's

namesake waterway has historically provided Lee County residents a ship-ping avenue and a scenic venue for out-door recreation. Lush valleys led local farmers to grow a wide range of crops, including tobacco, corn, and apples. The Daniel Boone National Forest, which covers thousands of acres of the county, provides an abundant source of hardwood. Taking advantage of the beautiful Appalachian Mountains, coal operations in the county have been a historic aspect of this region.

Formed in the years following the Civil War, Lee County did not take long to become a center of regional ground and water transportation. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Louisville and Atlantic Railroad extended its line to Beattyville, encour-aging new opportunities for local growth. The following decades saw a strengthening economy and growing population.

As the county developed, so did its rural traditions. One of them, the local Woolly Worm Festival, celebrates Lee County's mountain culture. Each Octo-ber, the community gathers for a vari-ety of events, including a pet show, a parade, and a pageant. The most inter-esting day is the Woolly Worm Races, where young people see whose banded woolly worm is the fastest to climb a string. The winning worm is given the responsibility of predicting that year's upcoming winter based on its body's coloration. This is just one example of the pride every Lee County resident can enjoy in their home county.

I frequently get the chance to visit with families in Lee County and con-sistently work to advance their prior-ities in the Senate. For example, I have partnered with local officials to secure millions of Federal dollars to upgrade their water infrastructure and to build a hiking and mountain biking trail. It has also been a privilege to support the brave drug eradication efforts of law enforcement and the Kentucky Na-tional Guard in the Daniel Boone Na-tional Forest. Answering the call of Kentuckians is one of the best aspects of my service in the Senate, and I look forward to continuing to deliver for communities in Lee County and across Kentucky.

Lee County will kick off its year of festivities on March 1, the same day the county was established in 1870. In addition to many community events, the county is also presenting an oral history project, featuring community members discussing local artifacts and historical events. There is certainly a lot to celebrate about the last 150 years. I am delighted to join all the families throughout Lee County in marking this impressive milestone, and I urge my Senate colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this wonderful Eastern Kentucky community.

S.J. RES. 68

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, earlier today, we voted on an amendment to

S.J. Res. 68 that was offered by the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator RISCH. That amendment consisted of one sentence, as follows: "The President has a con-stitutional responsibility to take ac-tions to defend the United States, its territories, possessions, citizens, serv-icemembers and diplomats from at-tack."

On its face, the Risch amendment seems reasonable. The President does have a responsibility to defend the country. But, as is so often the case, the devil is in the details, or the ab-sence of details, and when it involves engaging U.S. Armed Forces in hos-tilities, we should pay particularly close attention. I was among those who opposed the amendment and I want to explain why.

First, it is important to note that the underlying resolution already states that "[nothing] in this section shall be construed to prevent the United States from defending itself from imminent attack." So there is no question about the President's authority to defend the country. But the central purpose of the resolution is to give meaning to the Congress's constitutional authority—the Congress's sole power—to declare war. For far too long this body has sur-rendered that duty to the executive branch.

In 2002, when the Senate considered whether or not to authorize President George W. Bush to invade Iraq, many in this body argued that providing the President with that authority was needed to convince Saddam Hussein to back down. I, instead, saw it as Con-gress abdicating its constitutional duty by providing the President with open-ended authority to use military force against Iraq. For that reason, among others, I voted no.

In fact, my worst fears were realized. Not only was the justification for that war based on lies, but thousands of Americans died, trillions of dollars were wasted that could have been used to fix what's broken in this country, and the American people are no safer. Today that authority is being used in ways that no one envisioned or in-tended to justify an attack against an-other country, Iran, nearly two decades later.

We should learn from that costly mistake. The obvious implication of the Risch amendment is that any President is authorized, and has an af-firmative responsibility, to use mili-tary force at anytime, anywhere, in-definitely, to prevent an unspecified attack that might occur sometime in the future. There is no requirement that it be "imminent". There is no re-quirement that such an attack be any-thing other than speculative or imag-ined.

Given the way this and past adminis-trations have expansively interpreted past authorizations for the use of force, the Risch amendment could be inter-preted to further erode Congress's abil-ity to prevent a President from unilat-

erally sending U.S. forces into hos-tilities without prior consultation with, or further authorization from, the Congress. Such an endorsement—even if unintended—of unchecked Exec-utive power undermines the purpose of the underlying joint resolution, and it makes a mockery of the Congress's sole power to declare war. That is not some-thing any of us should condone.

THE CLEAN ECONOMY ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I rise to discuss solutions to the climate crisis, which threatens the health and well-being of my constituents in Mary-land and Americans across the Nation.

The urgency of climate change asks us to be our most cooperative and col-laborative selves and to seek policy so-lutions that far outlast our legacies in office. As the threat of climate change becomes more and more visible to the American public, people are demanding action from their Federal Government. This year, we have seen an unprece-dented level of interest from Ameri-cans of all ages and walks of life on real solutions to this complex problem. A variety of comprehensive solutions have been proposed, some that rep-resent a departure from how the Fed-eral Government has addressed climate change in the past, while others utilize existing Federal frameworks to drive climate action.

History tells us that our Federal agencies have an incredible capacity to evolve to meet the threats of their time. In previous administrations, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been a dynamic steward of domes-tic environmental law throughout the last half-century and is well-practiced in addressing environmental concerns as they emerge. Unfortunately, Con-gress and the President have failed to provide the EPA with the direction and funding it needs to address the issue of climate change in earnest. I support Senator CARPER's Clean Economy Act for this very reason. The Clean Econ-omy Act understands that the EPA lies at the center of America's climate fu-ture and empowers it to address cli-mate change proactively.

The Clean Economy Act provides the agency with the clear goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 to match the urgency to reduce warming global temperatures. The Intergovern-mental Panel on Climate Change's—IPCC—October 2018 Special Report on climate warns that warming above 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels will have a catastrophic impact on our global systems. The United States reaching net-zero is an essential component to keep global temperature warming below the 1.5 degrees Celsius cap.

Many of this administration's nomi-nees are fond of pointing out that they are not scientists, implying that they are not qualified to make decisions re-lated to climate change. I will point out that most of us are not economists