

healthcare, employment, and housing systems in the United States, leading to a disparate impact on LGBTQ people;

Whereas the persistent failure of Federal and State officials to collect full and accurate data on sexual orientation and gender identity, particularly in the current COVID-19 pandemic, causes tremendous harm to LGBTQ people in the United States, who remain largely invisible to the government entities entrusted with ensuring their health, safety, and well-being;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States serve on the front lines during the COVID-19 pandemic as doctors, nurses, medical professionals, law enforcement officers, firefighters, and first responders in all States and the District of Columbia;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States serve, and have served, the United States Army, Coast Guard, Navy, Air Force, and Marines honorably and with distinction and bravery;

Whereas an estimated number of more than 100,000 brave service members were discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States between the beginning of World War II and 2011 because of their sexual orientation, including the discharge of more than 13,000 service members under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in place between 1994 and 2011;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States serve, and have served, in positions in the Federal Government and State and local governments, including as members of Congress, Governors, mayors, and city council members;

Whereas the demonstrators who protested on June 28, 1969, following a law enforcement raid of the Stonewall Inn, an LGBTQ club in New York City, are pioneers of the LGBTQ movement for equality;

Whereas, throughout much of the history of the United States, same-sex relationships were criminalized in many States and many LGBTQ people in the United States were forced to hide their LGBTQ identities while living in secrecy and fear;

Whereas, on June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 135 S. Ct. 2584, that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry and acknowledged that "[n]o union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family.";

Whereas Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (referred to in this preamble as "AIDS") has disproportionately impacted LGBTQ people in the United States, due in part to a lack of funding and research devoted to finding effective treatment for AIDS and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (referred to in this preamble as "HIV") during the early stages of the HIV and AIDS epidemic;

Whereas gay and bisexual men and transgender women of color have a higher risk of contracting HIV;

Whereas the LGBTQ community has maintained its unwavering commitment to ending the HIV and AIDS epidemics;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States face disparities in employment, healthcare, education, housing, and many other areas central to the pursuit of happiness in the United States;

Whereas 28 States have no explicit ban on discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the workplace, housing, or public accommodations, and 34 States have no explicit ban on discrimination against LGBTQ individuals in education;

Whereas LGBTQ youth are at increased risk of—

- (1) suicide;
- (2) homelessness;

(3) becoming victims of bullying, violence, and human trafficking; and

(4) developing mental health illnesses, including anxiety and depression;

Whereas only 13 States and the District of Columbia have explicit policies in place to protect foster youth from discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity;

Whereas LGBTQ youth of color are over-represented in child welfare and juvenile justice systems;

Whereas the LGBTQ community has faced discrimination, inequality, and violence throughout the history of the United States;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States, in particular transgender individuals, face a disproportionately high risk of becoming victims of violent hate crimes;

Whereas members of the LGBTQ community have been targeted in acts of mass violence, including—

(1) the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida, on June 12, 2016, where 49 people were killed; and

(2) the arson attack at the UpStairs Lounge in New Orleans, Louisiana, on June 24, 1973, where 32 people died;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States face persecution, violence, and death in many parts of the world, including State-sponsored violence;

Whereas in the several years preceding 2019, hundreds of LGBTQ people around the world were arrested and, in some cases, tortured or even executed, because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in countries and territories such as Chechnya, Egypt, Indonesia, and Tanzania;

Whereas, in May 2019, Taiwan became the first place in Asia to extend marriage rights to same-sex couples;

Whereas, since June 2019, Ecuador, Northern Ireland, and Costa Rica have extended marriage rights to same-sex couples, the most recent country-wide extensions of those rights in the world;

Whereas policies such as the Migrant Protection Protocol and safe third country agreements with the countries of the Northern Triangle of Central America force LGBTQ asylum seekers to remain in dangerous conditions without adequate protections;

Whereas the LGBTQ community holds Pride festivals and marches in some of the most dangerous places in the world, despite threats of violence and arrest;

Whereas, in 2009, President Barack Obama signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act (division E of Public Law 111-84; 123 Stat. 2835) into law to protect all people in the United States from crimes motivated by the actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of an individual;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States have fought for equal treatment, dignity, and respect;

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States have achieved significant milestones, ensuring that future generations of LGBTQ people in the United States will enjoy a more equal and just society;

Whereas, despite being marginalized throughout the history of the United States, LGBTQ people in the United States continue to celebrate their identities, love, and contributions to the United States in various expressions of Pride;

Whereas Pride is a celebration of visibility in spite of marginalization, and the LGBTQ community will continue to observe this significant cultural practice even though physical Pride celebrations may be compromised in June 2020 due to the health and safety needs of all individuals involved;

Whereas, in June 2020, the Supreme Court of the United States affirmed that existing civil rights laws prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, a landmark victory for the LGBTQ community; and

Whereas LGBTQ people in the United States remain determined to pursue full equality, respect, and inclusion for all individuals regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the rights, freedoms, and equal treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (referred to in this resolution as "LGBTQ") people in the United States and around the world;

(2) acknowledges that LGBTQ rights are human rights that are to be protected by the laws of the United States and numerous international treaties and conventions;

(3) supports efforts to ensure the equal treatment of all people in the United States, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity;

(4) supports efforts to ensure that the United States remains a beacon of hope for the equal treatment of people around the world, including LGBTQ individuals; and

(5) encourages the celebration of June as "LGBTQ Pride Month" in order to provide a lasting opportunity for all people in the United States—

(A) to learn about the discrimination and inequality that the LGBTQ community endured, and continues to endure; and

(B) to celebrate the contributions of the LGBTQ community throughout the history of the United States.

## NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to S. Res. 625, a resolution entitled Encouraging the Government and the people of the United States to "Buy American" and for other purposes, dated June 17, 2020 for the reasons as stated in the RECORD.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have notified the Senate majority leader of my intent to object to proceeding to S. Res. 625, a resolution encouraging the Government and the people of the United States to "Buy American." The resolution, though well-intentioned, would have implications on trade and manufacturing policy that require further study. It could further invite our trading partners to take similar actions that would negatively impact U.S. farmers, businesses, consumers, and workers.

## AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I have 8 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC  
WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

## COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

## COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 4:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

## COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 4:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,  
AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

## COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

## SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 12 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST  
TIME—S. 3985

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3985) to improve and reform policing practices, accountability, and transparency.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

## APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro

tempore, upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to Public Law 105-292, as amended by Public Law 106-55, Public Law 107-228, and Public Law 112-75, appoints the following individual to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Reverend Frederick A. Davie of New York.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 18,  
2020

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, June 18; further, that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Walker nomination; finally, notwithstanding rule XXII, postclosure time on the Walker nomination expire at 1:30 p.m.

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

## ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator BLUMENTHAL.

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

The Senator from Connecticut.

NOMINATION OF JUSTIN REED  
WALKER

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here to talk about the nomination of Justin Walker to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, but let's start with Conner Curran. Justin Walker actually has met Conner—not really, but I introduced him to Conner through this picture during his nomination hearing in the Judiciary Committee.

Several years ago, Conner was diagnosed with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a degenerative life-threatening disease which presently has no cure. Most people who have the disease die by their mid-20s. Conner was diagnosed at age 5. I met Conner a couple of years later. There is probably nobody who has inspired me more with his courage, his energy, his strength of character than Conner Curran and his wonderful family who live in Ridgefield, CT.

His parents were told, at the time of his diagnosis, that this beautiful young sweet child would slowly lose his ability to run, lift his arms, hug them, and he would need complex care for the rest of his life. He would need multiple specialists that would cost tens of thousands of dollars each year, which they

could not afford. But they made it possible or, actually, it was made possible by the Affordable Care Act. Now, because of that act, he cannot be denied care. He is alive. He is not giving up. He is fighting for both a cure and the Affordable Care Act.

He is not the only one. There are 1.5 million people in the State of Connecticut alone and millions more around the country living with pre-existing conditions. There are 182,000 children among those 1.5 million people, just like Conner, living with the potentially debilitating and even deadly effects of preexisting conditions, and there are millions more around the country. For them, for Americans, the Affordable Care Act is more than a law; it is a lifeline. Each of them can get the affordable care they need because of that lifeline.

Right now, we all know that healthcare has never been more important. We talk about it every day. We are full of rhetoric on the floor of this Chamber about the healthcare crisis, which has precipitated an economic crisis and about the disproportionate effects of that healthcare crisis—a pandemic of an insidious, deadly disease on poor and, often, communities of color.

At the time of this crisis, the President of the United States has nominated Justin Walker to be an appellate judge, a present district court judge who has said that his main mission is to destroy the Affordable Care Act. Of course, that is perfectly consistent with the Trump administration's view of the Affordable Care Act. It is litigating in court right now against the Affordable Care Act. President Trump has opposed it consistently, constantly, vociferously.

Justin Walker, at his investiture as a district court judge, pledged that he would continue to make destruction of the Affordable Care Act a priority. During his investiture remarks, attended by his mentor, the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, he said:

[A]lthough my legal principles are prevalent, they have not yet prevailed. . . . [A]lthough we are winning, we have not won. . . . [A]lthough we celebrate today, we cannot take for granted tomorrow or we will lose our courts and our country.

That wasn't some law review article that Justin Walker wrote back when he was going to school. It wasn't some speech that he made to a local chamber of commerce. It was literally at his swearing in as a U.S. district court judge for the Western District of Kentucky just months ago, not even a year. He said: "[A]lthough my legal principles are prevalent, they have not yet prevailed." If there were a new meaning to give to the word "irony," this nomination would exemplify it.

During a public health crisis, the President of the United States has nominated someone who wants to take healthcare away from people and deny them health insurance.

The reason Conner is here is really to show that these big principles have real-life consequences. Judges have impact. The law matters. Words matter.