

such a briefing and reviewing the additional relevant information.

After reviewing the provided rationale, I have several concerns. Chief among them is that CIGIE does not traditionally conduct investigations into agency or OIG leaks. It reviews allegations against individuals but not IG offices and generally lacks the funds and resources to conduct work outside of their narrow scope. As a matter of course however, IGs do traditionally check each other's work, and CIGIE often suggests that allegations against IGs or their offices be referred to peer IGs. This is done when crucial IG independence must be maintained but the appearance of conflicts of interest may arise. It would also not be uncharacteristic for an IG to safeguard the office's statutorily required independence by potentially refusing to provide internal information to its parent agency. In short, although it would make little sense for CIGIE to conduct the leak investigation in the manner desired by the State Department, it would not be outside the bounds of precedent for one office of inspector general to conduct an investigation into another.

Although I have not yet had the opportunity to verify the allegations regarding Mr. Linick, as I noted earlier, the President retains the constitutional authority to manage executive branch personnel. My objection to these nominees was designed to prompt compliance with the IG Reform Act, which the President has now done with regards to Mr. Linick. Therefore, I am withdrawing my objection to Mr. Billingslea.

On June 12, 2020, I received the enclosed letter from the White House Counsel which finally fulfills the executive branch's legal requirement to provide Congress reasons for an IG's removal with regard to Mr. Atkinson.

As it pertains to Mr. Atkinson: Even though the President satisfied the requirements of the law, I do not agree that the provided reasons merited Mr. Atkinson's removal. In the provided transcript the President states, "I thought [Atkinson] did a terrible job. Absolutely terrible . . . But ask him, 'Why didn't you go and see the [transcript of my phone call with the Ukrainian president]?' There was no rush. [Atkinson] said, 'Oh we'd have to rush it.'" I infer from this statement that the reason(s) that the President removed Mr. Atkinson was because of the speed with which he sought to bring the whistleblower information to Congress and/or his role generally in the impeachment process.

With respect to this objection concerning Mr. Atkinson's supposed haste, it is necessary to review the IC IG's responsibility under the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010. The act provides the IC IG only 14 days to determine if an "urgent concern" "appears credible" and transmit that information to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, ODNI. No-

tably, the law also does not require that a full investigation of a whistleblower's allegations be completed before the information is provided to Congress. Reading such a requirement into the law could result in critical and relevant information not reaching the ODNI or Congress in a timely manner, and could pose a chilling effect on whistleblowers' willingness to report urgent concerns and other issues of waste, fraud, and abuse in the intelligence community. That being said, I understand and appreciate the President's irritation with this IG's action being a factor in the House of Representatives' impeachment.

In those remarks, the President also said that "they give this whistleblower a status that he doesn't deserve . . . And, frankly, somebody ought to sue [him]." To the extent that the President is referring to Mr. Atkinson's determination that the whistleblower allegation at issue amounted to an urgent concern under the law, there remains a significant difference of legal opinion on this matter. The President's position is supported by the Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel, and Presidents routinely follow the legal determinations of that office. However, whether or not the whistleblower's allegation meets the legal definition of an "urgent concern" under the law, I obviously do not agree that person should be sued or otherwise retaliated against.

My objection to these nominees was designed to prompt compliance with the IG Reform Act, which the President has now done with regards to Mr. Atkinson. Therefore, I am withdrawing my objection to Mr. Miller.

Although some may want to believe that this is a new issue unique to this administration, it certainly is not. In July of 2009, then President Obama removed the Corporation for National and Community Service—CNCS—Inspector General, Gerald Walpin, from his post in a very similar manner and also did not provide reasons for removal. This began a bout of negotiations that resulted in not only the hold of several Presidential nominees but also a bicameral congressional investigation into the matter. In that case, I similarly pushed for compliance with the statute, held up a nominee to obtain information, and disagreed with the stated reasons for Mr. Walpin's removal. In the end, Mr. Walpin was never reinstated.

Given the misinterpretation of the statute by successive administrations from both political parties, it is apparent that Congress must clarify the statute to ensure inspectors general are able to continue operating without undue interference. So I am introducing a bipartisan bill today to accomplish just that.

(At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Speaker, today I will not be present to vote on the con-

firmation of Justin Walker, vote 123, to be a judge on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Were I present, I would vote nay.●

JUNETEENTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, tomorrow, we will commemorate the 155th Juneteenth, the celebration of the end of chattel slavery in the United States. On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger and Union soldiers delivered the news of liberation to one of the last remaining confederate outposts in Galveston, TX. The Civil War had ended, and the last remaining enslaved Black Americans were free. General Gordon's decree would arrive over 2 years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

For millions of Black Americans, Juneteenth traditionally has been a celebration of this freedom; it is also a day of reflection and education on a history that we all must confront. There is much to inform us about our present times that we can learn from the story of Juneteenth. It is the story of America, the story of my home State of Maryland. Each year, I aim to share these lessons and resources with my constituents through my office and in recognizing the continued work we must do to elevate Black history and create a more tolerant society. This year, my office will close to commemorate the holiday and allow staff the time to reflect on its important historical lessons.

Juneteenth is a reminder that, even after the signing of Abraham Lincoln's seminal declaration, that even in a Nation whose founding documents should have enshrined liberty and justice for all of its inhabitants, freedom was a dream deferred for Black Americans. It is a reminder that liberation was hard fought by those who were denied it, including abolition leaders like Marylanders Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman, who then passed the torch to civil rights leaders and social movements past and present who are still fighting to realize equal justice under law. Equal justice under law is a promise the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Emancipation Proclamation all made, but it remains elusive, so the struggle continues.

In this way, Juneteenth is a quintessential American holiday. The institution of chattel slavery is interwoven throughout American history and would become the architecture for unjust systems that still stand today. The Juneteenth liberation would precede over a century of continued oppression, oppression through stigmatization, policymaking, voter disenfranchisement, and Jim Crow segregation laws, which continued to widen the gaps of social, economic, and political achievement for Black Americans in our society. Acknowledging its sinister legacy and the efforts to chip away at it are critical to understanding how to dismantle it from its core.

Through the lens of recent tragedies—the police killings of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and, just this week, Rayshard Brooks—and the worldwide anti-racism protests they have sparked, this education is more important than ever. We are being called to connect the dots in our history and take action to bring about meaningful change, to save lives, and to right the wrongs of the past. We are being called, yet again, to answer in what ways are our constitutional promises still left unfulfilled for Black Americans?

Answering this question is essential to addressing police and criminal justice reform. From the establishment of deputized slave patrols in the American South, to the enforcement of segregation laws through the 1960s, to mass incarceration and disproportionate police violence in our present day, Black Americans have often faced systemic racism that the law either required or permitted. The same 13th Amendment that abolished slavery did so in all forms except incarceration, shrouding the institution in a new light and enabling the continued suppression of freedom and rights.

Today, Black Americans are still twice as likely to be killed by police as White Americans. And despite representing only 12 percent of the U.S. adult population, Black Americans make up 33 percent of the sentenced prison population. We have seen the brutal videos. We see the painful list of names of men and women killed at the hands of police brutality. We see the effects of this cyclical system on the health of our communities and families every day. We must act to stop it.

The roots of systemic racism in law enforcement were planted centuries ago and can be unraveled with targeted and conscious action. This is why I have been proud to work with my colleagues Senators BOOKER and HARRIS on crafting police reform legislation that works toward justice and systemic change, the Justice in Policing Act. This broader legislation includes two bills I have introduced for several years, the End Racial and Religious Profiling Act and the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act. The Justice in Policing Act would prohibit racial profiling, improve officer training, and hold officers accountable for the misconduct that keeps alive the culture has reinforced centuries of oppression. I hope the Senate can pass this bill. Equal treatment of individuals under the law must not be a partisan issue.

All Americans must recognize and celebrate Juneteenth so that we may face these harsh realities about our past and present and understand that the fight for freedom is ongoing. We cannot ignore our past, for it is with us here in the present in many forms. The wounds of our Nation will not heal until we identify and name their source and commit to doing the work in Congress and in our communities to mend them. Freedom has never been free, nor

has it ever come easily. Let us celebrate liberation by doing everything we can to fight for it for generations to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT DEL G. ATKINSON

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the career of U.S. Air National Guard CMSgt. Del G. Atkinson, who is retiring after almost 40 years of faithful service to our country.

Chief Atkinson entered Federal Active-Duty service in the U.S. Army in August 1982. He was stationed in Nuremburg, West Germany, with the 595th Military Police Company, First Armored Division “Old Ironsides” and the 101st Airborne Division “Screaming Eagles” with the 101st Military Police Company Fort Campbell, KY.

Upon completion of his Army service, he entered into the Air National Guard. During his lengthy career in the Guard, Chief Atkinson served a number of combat deployments, including Operations Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and Coronet Oak.

Chief Atkinson used his experience in the Army to launch a career in law enforcement, working as a member of the University of Arkansas Police Department and the Springdale, AR, Police Department.

Over the course of almost 36 years, his military service took him around the globe, and yet, whether it was in Arkansas, our Nation’s Capital, or overseas, he and I always seemed to be crossing paths.

A number of those occasions were more than just fortunate circumstances, as for a time, he was part of a team responsible for providing protection for aircraft transitioning between overseas airfields with inadequate security.

He often found himself assigned to Senate, congressional, and White House missions. I was privileged to have been onboard for some of those flights. My colleagues and I relied on Del and his teammates, for our protection as we traveled to some dangerous parts of the world.

On those trips, I remember looking back on his time in local law enforcement and thinking to myself how special it was that northwest Arkansas had extra representation onboard. Del and his colleagues took great care of us, each and every time, and for that, I will always be appreciative.

Chief Atkinson was promoted eight times during the course of his military career. He earned a number of prestigious awards and medals including a Meritorious Service Medal with three oakleaf clusters and the Joint Service Commendation Medal.

His pride in our Nation and his fellow servicemembers is apparent, including with his service as a member of the

Liberty Jump Team, where he performed commemorative parachute jumps honoring veterans of wars and foreign conflicts. He joined the team because he “wanted to give back to the Greatest Generation” and honor how they “overcame all obstacles and persevered to win the victory on all fronts.”

I remain grateful for Del’s combat service to the Nation, dedication to keeping the UA campus and the community of Springdale safe during his law enforcement days, and commitment to keep alive the memory of those who sacrificed for our Nation. I wish him years of joy and happiness in retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations, and treaties, which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

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

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4856. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Modification of DFARS Clause ‘Notification of Anticipated Contract Termination or Reduction’” (RIN0750-AK56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 17, 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4857. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Repeal of Annual Reporting Requirements to Congressional Defense Committees” (RIN0750-AK91) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 17, 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4858. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, Department of Defense,