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No. 40

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 14, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ADRIAN SMITH to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of mercy, thank You for giving us another day.

You alone can trace the deepest fault lines of history and read the highest aspirations of the human heart.

Bless the Members of the people's House today. Give them sound judgment and make them as practical as the American people who sent them here as their Representatives.

Help them to withstand open criticism when they know what is right before You and conscience. Often they are characterized by half-truths and attributed motives that are far beneath them. Uphold them at such times with personal integrity and compassion for those most in need.

Having called them to serve others to the best of their ability, lift them even higher by Your grace and power to live and work for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A PUBLIC SERVANT REMEMBERED

(Mr. EMMER of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the

memory of Washington County Commissioner Ted Bearth, who passed away last week.

Ted was elected to the county board in 2012 and was reelected in 2014, representing Washington County's Second District. However, Ted's long record of public service began more than 40 years ago, when he was elected to the Oakdale City Council in 1974. He spent an impressive 26 years of service as a city council member and mayor.

Ted's commitment to Minnesota and his community goes well beyond elected office. As a Marine Corps veteran, he was also involved in the Oakdale Veterans Memorial Committee.

Ted Bearth was a beloved member of our community and a dedicated public servant. Despite his declining health, he stayed involved and in touch with county staffers and fellow commissioners. He was known for his strong leadership and ability to forge lasting connections.

I wish Ted's family peace during this difficult time and assure them that he will be greatly missed by many Minnesotans.

IN HONOR OF NANCY DAVIS REAGAN

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week the American people lost a devoted public servant, Nancy Davis Reagan.

As a former staff member of the Reagan administration, I will always appreciate the devotion of Nancy Reagan to the American people, especially to her husband "Ronnie."

Nancy Reagan will always be cherished for how she inspired a Nation and showed that goodwill prevailed. She demonstrated that service by showing

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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small acts could make a world of difference. Nancy's fierce love for her husband and her country was her service.

A passionate advocate for drug awareness and prevention, Nancy Reagan launched the "Just Say No" program to fight drug and alcohol abuse among young people to promote fulfilling lives. She strived to always make a positive impact for our citizens.

Mrs. Reagan showed that no act of kindness, no act of love, is too small to be meaningful. She practiced what she preached, living every day to the fullest. In every sense of the word, she was the very model of a First Lady, wife, and mother.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Happy 13th birthday, Addison.

DINA KIM RECEIVES PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dina Kim, a senior at State College Area High School, located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, on earning the national President's Volunteer Service Award.

This award honors people across the Nation who have volunteered 100 hours per year or more in service to their communities. Dina has worked for years as a translator for Compassion Korea and was a former volunteer in Malaysia, helping to teach English to refugee students.

Dina started volunteering with Compassion Korea when she was in fifth grade. The organization allows people from around the world to sponsor a child in need from another country. Dina works to translate letters from children to their sponsor families in Korean.

Dina Kim estimates that she has accumulated 600 hours of volunteer service both in State College, her former home in Texas, and in Malaysia.

She will graduate this year and plans to attend college, majoring in linguistics. She is an example of the great contributions young people can bring to the communities we serve. I congratulate Dina on this award and wish her the best of luck in the future.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 10, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 10, 2016 at 1:35 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 524.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1506

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS) at 3 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FAIR RATEPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND EFFICIENCY STANDARDS ACT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2984) to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2984

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Fair Ratepayer Accountability, Transparency, and Efficiency Standards Act" or the "Fair RATES Act".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.

Subsection (d) of section 205 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824d(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "Any absence of action by the Commission that allows a change to take effect under this sec-

tion, including the Commission allowing the sixty days' notice herein provided to expire without Commission action, shall be treated as an order issued by the Commission accepting such change for purposes of section 313."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As we begin consideration of this legislation, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) for bringing this matter to the attention of our committee.

The Federal Power Act sets forth processes to set rates for electricity, including opportunities for the public to protest a rate change filed with FERC. New rates take effect if FERC approves them or if FERC fails to issue an order approving or denying the filed rate within 60 days. The failure to approve or deny a rate may result from agency delay or, in some limited cases, from a vote that results in a deadlocked Commission, for example, a 2-2 vote. In such cases, the rates become effective by operation of law even when these rates were not approved by a majority of Commissioners.

The Federal Power Act provides administrative redress for members of the public to protest Commission rate decisions. However, if these rates become effective by operation of law—for example, a deadlock, 2-2—the administrative processes are not available to the public because FERC did not actually issue an order for the public to protest. The public literally gets shut out.

I don't want to speak for the gentleman from Massachusetts, but I think some of his constituents recently experienced this firsthand. As a result of that and of the hard work of Mr. KENNEDY's, of his staff's, and of the committee staffs' on both sides of the aisle, this legislation was drafted, and we considered it in committee. We have it on the floor today, and I would urge all of the Members to support this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the House for allowing me to discuss the Fair RATES Act, H.R. 2984, and for bringing it to the floor for a vote.

I also thank Chairman WHITFIELD, Chairman UPTON, Ranking Members

RUSH and PALLONE, as well as the committee staffs on both sides, for their work with our office to help this bill move forward. In particular, to echo Chairman WHITFIELD's comments, he has been an incredible partner with us as we have tried to move this bill forward, and I am truly grateful for his assistance in doing so.

Mr. Speaker, every year regulators in New England hold energy capacity auctions to ensure that we have sufficient energy that is generated to meet consumer demand. Two years ago, during an auction, there was a shortfall that triggered administrative pricing at triple the current capacity payments, skyrocketing from about \$1 billion to \$3 billion.

That rate increase hasn't even reached our constituents yet, and our region already pays the highest energy rates in the continental United States. Next June, a significant portion of their bills will triple due to that auction.

When the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reviewed the rate increase, it was down to four commissioners and it deadlocked 2-2. One Democratic Commissioner and one Republican Commissioner raised concerns about whether those rates were just and reasonable for consumers. However, the rates took effect by operation of law without any action from FERC; and because there was no official decision by FERC, there was no decision to appeal, holding our constituents voiceless.

Another annual auction just took place last month with rates, again, that were three times higher than they are today. Those rates are, again, being reviewed by a shorthanded FERC, which sets up the potential for the exact same outcome of consumers, once again, being shut out of the process.

With bipartisan support and endorsements from the American Public Power Association, the New England Public Power Association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, my bill, the Fair RATES Act, would simply ensure that avenues of good governance remain open. It provides that if at any time rate changes take effect by operation of law without Commission action, deadlocked or otherwise, aggrieved parties retain the right to protest those rates through the process that is outlined by the Federal Power Act.

I am the first to admit that this is a complex issue, but my bill is a simple fix to a complex problem. When we as lawmakers identify a flaw in one of our laws, especially one that unduly harms our constituents, it is our obligation to act to amend the law.

The unpredictability of my region's energy rates means families can't save for the future and local businesses can't grow. The least we can do is to ensure that they will never be held voiceless when their electric bills arrive at the end of each month; so I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to give particular thanks to the committee staffs on both the majority and minority sides, including Patrick Currier, Allison Trexler, Rick Kessler, Caitlin Haberman, and Alexander Ratner.

Finally, I have to acknowledge somebody on my own team, Eric Fins, who knows more about energy rates and capacity markets than he ever thought he would, and I am grateful for that. He is now writing a law school essay on the topic.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I do want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts, once again, for bringing this important issue before us.

We must allow the public to have administrative process relief, and this legislation will do that in those cases when FERC does not actually issue an order; so I would urge the passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2984.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENERGY EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY ACT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1268) to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1268

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Energy Efficient Government Technology Act".

SEC. 2. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Subtitle C of title V of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-140; 121 Stat. 1661) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 530. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) DIRECTOR.—The term 'Director' means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

"(2) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—The term 'information technology' has the meaning given that term in section 11101 of title 40, United States Code.

"(b) DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each Federal agency shall coordinate with the Director, the Secretary, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy (that in-

cludes best practices and measurement and verification techniques) for the maintenance, purchase, and use by the Federal agency of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies, taking into consideration the performance goals established under subsection (d).

"(c) ADMINISTRATION.—In developing an implementation strategy under subsection (b), each Federal agency shall consider—

- "(1) advanced metering infrastructure;
- "(2) energy-efficient data center strategies and methods of increasing asset and infrastructure utilization;
- "(3) advanced power management tools;
- "(4) building information modeling, including building energy management;
- "(5) secure telework and travel substitution tools; and
- "(6) mechanisms to ensure that the agency realizes the energy cost savings brought about through increased efficiency and utilization.

"(d) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall establish performance goals for evaluating the efforts of Federal agencies in improving the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technology.

"(2) BEST PRACTICES.—The Chief Information Officers Council established under section 3603 of title 44, United States Code, shall recommend best practices for the attainment of the performance goals, which shall include Federal agency consideration of, to the extent applicable by law, the use of—

- "(A) energy savings performance contracting; and
- "(B) utility energy services contracting.

"(e) REPORTS.—

"(1) AGENCY REPORTS.—Each Federal agency shall include in the report of the agency under section 527 a description of the efforts and results of the agency under this section.

"(2) OMB GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY REPORTS AND SCORECARDS.—Effective beginning not later than October 1, 2017, the Director shall include in the annual report and scorecard of the Director required under section 528 a description of the efforts and results of Federal agencies under this section."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 529 the following:

"Sec. 530. Energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies."

SEC. 3. ENERGY EFFICIENT DATA CENTERS.

Section 453 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17112) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (b)(2)(D)(iv), by striking "determined by the organization" and inserting "proposed by the stakeholders";
- (2) by striking subsection (b)(3); and
- (3) by striking subsections (c) through (g) and inserting the following:

"(c) STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall carry out subsection (b) in collaboration with the information technology industry and other key stakeholders, with the goal of producing results that accurately reflect the most relevant and useful information available. In such collaboration, the Secretary and the Administrator shall pay particular attention to organizations that—

- "(1) have members with expertise in energy efficiency and in the development, operation, and functionality of data centers, information technology equipment, and software, such as representatives of hardware manufacturers, data center operators, and facility managers;

“(2) obtain and address input from Department of Energy National Laboratories or any college, university, research institution, industry association, company, or public interest group with applicable expertise;

“(3) follow—

“(A) commonly accepted procedures for the development of specifications; and

“(B) accredited standards development processes; and

“(4) have a mission to promote energy efficiency for data centers and information technology.

“(d) MEASUREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall consider and assess the adequacy of the specifications, measurements, best practices, and benchmarks described in subsection (b) for use by the Federal Energy Management Program, the Energy Star Program, and other efficiency programs of the Department of Energy or the Environmental Protection Agency.

“(e) STUDY.—The Secretary, in collaboration with the Administrator, shall, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, make available to the public an update to the Report to Congress on Server and Data Center Energy Efficiency published on August 2, 2007, under section 1 of Public Law 109–431 (120 Stat. 2920), that provides—

“(1) a comparison and gap analysis of the estimates and projections contained in the original report with new data regarding the period from 2008 through 2015;

“(2) an analysis considering the impact of information technologies, including virtualization and cloud computing, in the public and private sectors;

“(3) an evaluation of the impact of the combination of cloud platforms, mobile devices, social media, and big data on data center energy usage;

“(4) an evaluation of water usage in data centers and recommendations for reductions in such water usage; and

“(5) updated projections and recommendations for best practices through fiscal year 2020.

“(f) DATA CENTER ENERGY PRACTITIONER PROGRAM.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall maintain a data center energy practitioner program that leads to the certification of energy practitioners qualified to evaluate the energy usage and efficiency opportunities in Federal data centers. Each Federal agency shall consider having the data centers of the agency evaluated every 4 years, in accordance with section 543(f) of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 8253), by energy practitioners certified pursuant to such program.

“(g) OPEN DATA INITIATIVE.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall establish an open data initiative for Federal data center energy usage data, with the purpose of making such data available and accessible in a manner that encourages further data center innovation, optimization, and consolidation. In establishing the initiative, the Secretary shall consider the use of the online Data Center Maturity Model.

“(h) INTERNATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS AND METRICS.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall actively participate in efforts to harmonize global specifications and metrics for data center energy and water efficiency.

“(i) DATA CENTER UTILIZATION METRIC.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall facilitate the development of an efficiency metric that measures the energy efficiency of a data center (including equipment and facilities).

“(j) PROTECTION OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall not disclose any proprietary information or trade secrets provided by any individual or company for the purposes of carrying out this section or the programs and initiatives established under this section.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

□ 1515

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Representative ESHOO of California, a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, for her work on this bill.

This legislation would require Federal agencies to coordinate with the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy, including best practices and measurement and verification techniques for the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies. OMB would be required to track and report on each agency's progress.

In 2013, the U.S. data centers consumed an estimated 91 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity, enough electricity to power all of the households in New York City twice over; and, I might say, they are on track to reach 140 billion kilowatt-hours by 2020. This amounts to roughly 2 percent of all the electricity used in the U.S. each year. Federal data centers are responsible for at least 10 percent of all U.S. data center energy use.

Consequently, this bill seeks to improve the energy efficiency of Federal data centers by, in part, requiring the Department of Energy to update a 2007 report on data center energy efficiency and maintain a data center energy practitioner certification program. DOE also would establish an open data initiative to help share best practices and support further innovation and develop a metric that measures data center energy efficiency.

So this is a very important bill that focuses on efficiency in these Federal data centers, and I would urge all of the Members to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 1268, the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, sponsored by two Energy and Commerce Committee members, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER).

H.R. 1268 promotes the use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies and practices across the Federal Government, especially in data centers.

The bill amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, the EISA Act, to require Federal agencies to coordinate with OMB, DOE, and EPA in developing an implementation strategy for maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies.

The legislation highlights specific items that should be considered in the strategy and sets performance goals to evaluate agencies' efforts. It would also amend EISA to require DOE and EPA to collaborate with stakeholders as they implement the data center efficiency program and other measures to improve data center efficiency.

This legislation was reported with unanimous consent last month by the Energy and Commerce Committee, and the provisions of H.R. 1268 previously passed committee in 2015 as part of H.R. 8.

I commend Ms. ESHOO and Mr. KINZINGER. This is good, bipartisan efficiency legislation that deserves all of our support.

I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today in support of my legislation, the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act. I thank Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member PALLONE, and my legislative partner Congressman ADAM KINZINGER for their strong support of this bill.

This bill is all about bringing our federal government's IT and data centers into the 21st century. The federal government is the nation's largest landowner, employer, and energy user and should lead by example in this field. By requiring federal agencies to utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies, this legislation will reduce the federal government's energy use, save taxpayer dollars, and set the standard for the private sector.

Today, the world generates more data in twelve hours than was generated in all of human history prior to 2003. This data must be stored and processed at data centers which are the backbone of the 21st century economy but can be highly energy inefficient. While we now routinely hear about data centers, this was not the case when I began examining this issue over a decade ago. In those days I had to explain to my colleagues what a data center was. Today, most people understand that data centers are a critical part of our national infrastructure and are found in nearly every sector of our economy. According to the GSA, the federal government alone has

more than 2,000 data centers which store everything from Social Security and tax records to e-books at the Library of Congress.

Data centers are critical to our economy and our lives, but they can be extremely inefficient when it comes to energy use. Experts estimate that most data centers could slash their energy use by up to 80 or 90 percent by simply implementing existing technologies and best practices. Several Silicon Valley companies have taken the lead in developing efficient, sustainable data centers, but we can do much more across both the private sector and government.

H.R. 1268 will drive energy efficiency improvements across the government's IT and data centers by requiring federal agencies to:

1. Utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies;
2. Formulate specific goals and periodically evaluate their energy efficiency; and
3. Make data center energy usage statistics public in a way that empowers further innovation.

Importantly, the bill requires government agencies to formulate specific performance goals and a means to calculate overall cost savings. The Department of Energy estimates that implementation of best practices alone could reduce the government's data center energy bill by 20 to 40 percent. And the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions found that widespread adoption of energy efficient information technologies could save the federal government over \$5 billion in energy costs through 2020.

In 2005, I authored language in the Energy Policy Act which mandated an EPA study on the energy use and energy costs of data centers. This report was transmitted to Congress in 2007 and served as a driver of both private and public investment in energy efficiency. Based on widespread agreement across government, industry and academia, the bill before us today requires an update to this important report. H.R. 1268 also creates a new "Open Data" initiative to make federal data center energy usage statistics publicly available in a way that empowers further innovation.

The Energy Efficient Government Technology Act passed the House last Congress with 375 votes. It passed the House again in this Congress as part of H.R. 8, and it is included in the Senate's comprehensive energy bill which is currently being debated. This non-controversial, bipartisan bill has strong support from both industry and energy efficiency advocates, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1268, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL POWER ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4427) to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4427

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CLARIFICATION OF FACILITY MERGER AUTHORIZATION.

Section 203(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824b(a)(1)(B)) is amended by striking "such facilities or any part thereof" and inserting "such facilities, or any part thereof, of a value in excess of \$10,000,000".

SEC. 2. NOTIFICATION FOR CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS.

Section 203(a) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824b(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(7)(A) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Commission shall promulgate a rule requiring any public utility that is seeking to merge or consolidate, directly or indirectly, its facilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, or any part thereof, with those of any other person, to notify the Commission of such transaction not later than 30 days after the date on which the transaction is consummated if—

"(i) such facilities, or any part thereof, are of a value in excess of \$1,000,000; and

"(ii) such public utility is not required to secure an order of the Commission under paragraph (1)(B).

"(B) In establishing any notification requirement under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize the paperwork burden resulting from the collection of information."

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendment made by section 1 shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Section 203 of the Federal Power Act establishes requirements for the sale, disposition, merger, purchase, and acquisition of certain utility assets and facilities. In the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress amended section 203 by dividing the section into separate statutory subsections, adding a new subsection granting FERC jurisdiction to review sales of certain generating facilities and increasing the minimum monetary threshold from \$50,000 to \$10 million for three of the four statutory subsections. This monetary threshold serves as a floor to ensure that public utilities would only be required to file and FERC to review proposed trans-

actions of a minimal material significance.

As amended by Congress in 2005, the subsection in section 203 of the Federal Power Act that pertains to mergers and consolidations of FERC jurisdictional facilities did not include an express minimum monetary threshold of \$10 million or any other amount. FERC has since interpreted this statutory change as eliminating the de minimis exceptions for mergers and consolidations. As a result, mergers and consolidations of any amount, no matter how small, require FERC approval.

This legislation, H.R. 4427, which was introduced by Mr. POMPEO of Kansas, remedies this discrepancy by amending section 203 to expressly include a minimum monetary threshold of \$10 million for mergers and consolidations of FERC jurisdictional facilities, thereby mirroring the existing \$10 million monetary threshold set forth in the other three subsections of section 203.

As explained by the general counsel of FERC, "adding a \$10 million de minimis threshold to the 'merge and consolidate clause' . . . could ease the administrative burden on the Commission staff and the regulatory burden on industry without a significant negative effect on the Commission's regulatory responsibilities."

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to pass this legislation introduced by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO).

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4427, legislation by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO), which would add a \$10 million threshold to trigger FERC review of a merger or consolidation under section 203 of the Federal Power Act.

This is a significant change to current law as established by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that essentially did away with the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, PUHCA, as it had existed for 70 years, in order to reduce the burden on industry.

But it also fundamentally altered and strengthened section 203 of the Federal Power Act to protect against potential market abuses that might arise without the protections of PUHCA. With that reasonable compromise authored by then-Chairmen BARTON and Domenici, it earned the bipartisan support of Ranking Members Dingell and Bingaman.

Testimony we heard at a recent Energy and Power Subcommittee hearing highlighted that, last year, roughly 20 percent of section 203 applications fell beneath the \$10 million threshold. That is a significant number of applications.

Furthermore, in multiple conversations with FERC general counsel and others, it became clear that, if the bill were to be enacted in its original form, FERC would have no way to know if attempts were being made to evade the review threshold by structuring major

merger consolidation activity as a series of below-threshold consolidations. FERC has already told us that it has the tools to deal with efforts to evade review through such schemes if it finds out that they are occurring.

However, the clear problem was, which FERC acknowledged, that the bill, as introduced, would leave the Commission with no standardized way to acquire information to even know that these below-threshold transactions were actually occurring. I think we can all agree that FERC should not have to rely on trade publications or word of mouth to know that merger consolidation activity is occurring involving regulated entities.

The easiest way to address this problem is by requiring regulated entities engaging in merger or consolidation activity to simply have to notify FERC that a transaction is occurring, and that is exactly what the committee did when it adopted by voice vote an amendment by Subcommittee Ranking Member BOBBY RUSH.

The bill, as reported by the Energy and Commerce Committee, requires FERC to begin a rulemaking process to develop a short, simple notification process for transactions between \$1 million and \$10 million. The bill also includes statutory direction to FERC to minimize the notification burden on industry to the maximum extent possible.

What we envisioned is a standard form of a page or less, able to be completed online, that simply informs FERC that a transaction is occurring or has recently occurred, who is involved, what the appropriate amount of that transaction is, and a brief description of the transaction. The bill we are considering now also adds language requested by industry, supported by both the chairman and ranking member of the committee, which provides further certainty by setting a reporting deadline of not later than 30 days from the consummation of a reportable transaction.

I commend the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from Kansas, along with Chairman UPTON, Chairman WHITFIELD, and Ranking Member PALONE, for coming together and addressing this issue. It is a sensible piece of legislation that reduces the burden not only on industry, Mr. Speaker, but also on the government, while ensuring the public good is protected.

I urge passage of the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Massachusetts made reference, this bill will reduce regulatory burdens, bring important parity to the statute, while also protecting ratepayers by providing important notice requirements. I would urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the

rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4427, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REINSTATING AND EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT INVOLVING CLARK CANYON DAM

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2080) to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2080

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TIME FOR A FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT INVOLVING CLARK CANYON DAM.

Notwithstanding the time period described in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12429, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the "Commission") shall, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice and in accordance with the procedures of the Commission under that section, reinstate the license and extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of project works for the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), who is the author of this legislation.

□ 1530

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in firm support of H.R. 2080, which reinstates and extends the deadline for construction of the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project.

The dam is located outside of Dillon, Montana, and will provide critical electricity to both Montana and Idaho. That is why I am proud to have the entire Idaho delegation with me and the entirety of the Montana delegation in support of this bill.

The issue is the red tape. Despite the importance of the project, the red tape with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has created an impassable deadlock in it that won't allow for construction of it. Even though we all recognize that hydroelectric power is clean and it is appropriate and the project is enormously important to Montana and Idaho, the bureaucratic red tape has just prevented it from going forward.

This is why we are here. Congress must act, and Congress will act. I am sure my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will agree that this is a worthy project for Congress to use our authority and to introduce the legislation to authorize such projects and independently move ahead.

This is why I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 2080.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2080, a bill sponsored and led by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE) to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction on the hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

Mr. Speaker, on August 26, 2009, FERC licensed the Clark Canyon Dam project at the Bureau of Reclamation's Clark Canyon Dam on the Beaverhead River in Beaverhead County, Montana.

Section 13 of the Federal Power Act requires licensees to commence construction of the hydroelectric project within a time fixed by the license, no more than 2 years from its being issued. It also authorizes FERC to issue one extension of that deadline for no more than 2 years.

In March of 2015, FERC terminated the license for the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project after the licensee did not commence construction by the already extended deadline of August 2013.

The bill authorizes FERC to reinstate the terminated license for the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project to extend for 6 years the date by which the licensee is required to commence construction. FERC has no objections to this legislation, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce reported the bill by voice vote without dissent.

I hope my colleagues will support passage of H.R. 2080. I commend the gentleman from Montana for all his work in bringing this to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, this is an important piece of legislation to give additional time for the development of Clark Canyon Dam, for which a license has been issued in the past. I urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2080.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT INVOLVING GIBSON DAM

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2081) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2081

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TIME FOR FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT INVOLVING GIBSON DAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the requirements of section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12478-003, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the “Commission”) may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice and in accordance with the procedures of the Commission under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of the project for a 6-year period that begins on the date described in subsection (b).

(b) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date described in this subsection is the date of the expiration of the extension of the period required for commencement of construction for the project described in subsection (a) that was issued by the Commission prior to the date of enactment of this Act under section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), the author of this legislation.

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in firm support of H.R. 2081, which reinstates and extends the deadline for construction of the Gibson Dam hydroelectric project.

Similar to the project before, the Gibson Dam—this is situated in Augusta, Montana—is a partnership between the Greenfields Irrigation District of Fairfield, Montana, and Toll-

house Energy of Bellingham, Washington.

The project was officially licensed by FERC in 2014, and a 2-year extension was also granted that year. Unfortunately, delays once again in paperwork and redtape require that Congress act to extend the deadline.

I am fairly confident that my colleagues on the other side will also support this bill, being that the same issue before us is dams provide a clean source of power.

The project has been reviewed multiple times, and it is in the best interests of Montana and our country. The dam itself is important not only to Montana and local farming communities, but it also protects pivotal wildlife in areas around it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2081.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously out by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend Mr. ZINKE for his work on bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2081.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12642

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3447) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3447

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12642, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the

time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give a strong thanks to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for her work on this legislation.

This, like the other two pieces of legislation that we have just passed, refers to a hydroelectric project, in North Carolina in this instance.

Like the facts in the other cases, after granting a license to commence construction of this project, FERC issued an order terminating the project license as a result of continued delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for construction of the W. Kerr Scott Dam project for 6 years.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously out by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3447, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12715

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4416) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4416

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12715, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission. Any obligation of the licensee for the payment of annual charges under section 10(e) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 803(e)) shall commence upon conclusion of the time period to commence construction of the project, as extended by the Commission under this subsection.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give a special thanks to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) for his work on this legislation.

Like the other three before, this relates to a hydropower project, this one located at the Jennings Randolph Dam in West Virginia. Like the other cases, after granting a license to commence construction of this project, FERC issued an order terminating the project license as a result of continued delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation simply requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for construction of the Jennings Randolph Dam in West Virginia for 6 years.

I urge the passage of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend my colleague, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY), for bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4416.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 13287

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4434) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4434

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 13287, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 4 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the time period required for commencement of construction prescribed in the license.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, once again, this is legislation extending, for 8 years in this case, construction of a hydropower project at the Collinsville Dam in New York.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GIBSON) for his work on this bill.

Once again, the FERC had issued a license to commence construction of this project. They then issued an order terminating the project because it did not meet certain time deadlines because of delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation simply requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for a period of 8 years. I urge the passage of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill was reported unanimously by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. It has the support of a number of Democrats on the Committee on Energy and Commerce from New York who have been working with Mr. GIBSON on the legislation, including Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TONKO, and Ms. CLARKE. It was reported out, as I said, without dissent.

I urge passage of the bill.

I commend Mr. GIBSON for bringing it to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4434.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12737

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4411) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4411

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12737, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license for the project effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

□ 1545

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH), who is the author of this legislation.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, this bill, like the others before it dealing with dams, deals with a dam in Alleghany County, Virginia, the Gathright Dam project. It, too, was given a license. It, too, for various reasons amongst the agencies in the company seeking to build a hydroelectric dam or add to the project there, has not met the time constraints. This bill would extend that for up to 6 years. I would ask that we adopt it.

I would point out that this project would be a run-of-river project. In other words, it is not going to change the flow of the river in any way.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I ask that this bill be passed by the entire House.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported out unanimously by the Energy and Commerce Committee. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend my colleague from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) for bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think the House may be setting a record today on hydro-power projects.

I urge passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4411.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12740

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4412) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4412

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12740, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license for the project effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Before I get into a specific discussion of this legislation, I do want to thank the staff on both the Republican and Democratic side of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I certainly want to thank Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. PALLONE for working with us on all of these important pieces of legislation.

Once again, this particular bill relates to a hydropower project at the Flannagan Dam in Virginia. I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) for his work on this legislation.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, like the previous bills, this is a dam project in which the license was issued, but for various reasons, the timeline has expired or is about to expire, and this would give it up to an additional 6 years in which to get the project completed.

This, like the other one I mentioned, is also a run-of-river hydroelectric project, which means it won't change the flow of the river. None of the sports and recreational activities will be affected negatively in any way.

This is located in Dickenson County. It is the Flannagan project. I ask the House to approve this extension.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to conclude today by thanking committee staff from both sides of the aisle, again, on the Energy and Commerce Committee for all the work they put into making sure that the legislation today is possible. A tremendous amount of hours went into those efforts.

I also want to commend Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. UPTON for working in such a collaborative manner to get these bills to the floor today as well as the individual sponsors of the bill. Mr. GRIFFITH had two important pieces of legislation for his district.

Mr. Speaker, this specific piece of legislation was reported, again, unanimously by the Energy and Commerce Committee. I know of no objections to the bill. I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I also urge passage of H.R. 4412.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr.

WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4412.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 121

Whereas the Government of Syria, led by President Bashar al-Assad, has engaged in widespread torture and rape, employed starvation as a weapon of war, and massacred civilians, including through the use of chemical weapons, cluster munitions, and barrel bombs;

Whereas the vast majority of the civilians who have died in the Syrian conflict have been killed by the Government of Syria led by President Bashar al-Assad and its allies, specifically the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Iran's terrorist proxies including Hezbollah;

Whereas the Government of Syria reportedly has subjected nearly 1,000,000 civilians to devastating sieges and manipulated the delivery of humanitarian aid for its own gain, thereby weaponizing starvation against populations, such as in Madaya;

Whereas the Government of Syria continues to target schools, water, electric, and medical facilities as a way to deny civilians access to critical infrastructure and basic services;

Whereas the Government of Syria has conducted massive and widespread enforced disappearances, systematic torture, and killing, amounting to what the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic recently described as "extermination" at the hands of the State;

Whereas the same Commission of Inquiry described these and other actions perpetrated by the Government of Syria as war crimes and crimes against humanity;

Whereas the Government of Syria and its allies have carried out mass atrocities without regard for international norms or human decency;

Whereas the Government of Syria and its allies have attacked various religious and ethnic minority populations in Syria, including Christians, Turkmen, and Ismaelis;

Whereas the Russian Federation has not only enabled the Government of Syria's perpetration of these crimes but has committed its own violations of international law by leading deliberate bombing campaigns on ci-

vilian targets including bakeries, hospitals, markets, and schools, contrary to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254, adopted on December 18, 2015, which demanded "that all parties immediately cease any attacks against civilians and civilian objects";

Whereas the attacks by the Government of Syria and its allies have focused on civilian targets and the United States-backed opposition, and have led to the expansion of the Islamic State in Syria;

Whereas other parties to the conflict in Syria, including the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and the al-Nusra Front, have engaged in torture, rape, summary execution of government soldiers, kidnapping for ransom, and violence against civilians;

Whereas these continued violations of international law, without any promise of accountability, jeopardize hope for establishing a meaningful and lasting peace through the Geneva and Vienna processes;

Whereas Syria is not a state-party to the Rome Statute and is not a member of the International Criminal Court;

Whereas the United States supports the collection and analysis of documentation related to the ongoing violations of human rights, the coordination of Syrian and international actors working on documentation and transitional justice efforts, and education and outreach on transitional justice concepts and processes, including efforts of the Syria Justice and Accountability Center sponsored by the United States and various other states and multilateral institutions;

Whereas the international community has previously established ad hoc or regional tribunals through the United Nations to bring justice in specific countries where war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide have been committed;

Whereas ad hoc or regional tribunals, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, have successfully investigated and prosecuted war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and there are many positive lessons to be learned from such tribunals; and

Whereas any lasting, peaceful solution to the conflict in Syria must be based upon justice for all, including members of all factions, political parties, ethnicities, and religions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) strongly condemns the continued use of unlawful and indiscriminate violence against civilian populations by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(2) urges the United States and its partners to continue to demand and work toward the cessation of attacks on Syrian civilians by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(3) urges the Administration to establish additional mechanisms for the protection of civilians and to ensure consistent and equitable access to humanitarian aid for vulnerable populations;

(4) urges the United States to continue its support for efforts to collect and analyze documentation related to ongoing violations of human rights in Syria, and to prioritize the collection of evidence that can be used to support future prosecutions for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(5) urges the President to direct the United States representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, a

regional or international hybrid court to prosecute the perpetrators of grave crimes committed by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict; and (6) urges other nations to apprehend and deliver into the custody of such a Syrian war crimes tribunal persons indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide in Syria, and to provide information pertaining to such crimes to the tribunal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the U.N. Security Council should move immediately to establish a Syrian war crimes tribunal. H. Con. Res. 121, which I introduced, is a bipartisan piece of legislation backed by Chairman ROYCE as well as by ELIOT ENGEL and others, calling upon the administration to pursue this policy goal, including using our voice and vote at the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, past ad hoc/regional war crimes tribunals, including courts for Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia, have made a significant difference, holding some of the worst mass murderers to account with successful prosecutions followed by long jail sentences.

Who can forget the picture of the infamous former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, with his head bowed, incredulous that the Special Court for Sierra Leone in 2012 meted out a 50-year jail term for his crimes against humanity and war crimes.

According to the Syrian Center for Policy Research, approximately 5 years of wanton bloodshed in Syria has killed either directly or indirectly an estimated 470,000 people. Other estimates put the death toll at a quarter of a million.

While the United Nations long ago abandoned estimating the death toll due to its inability to verify the veracity of the numbers, the war in Syria has caused a massive loss of life, including genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities, especially women and children.

The International Syria Support Group, co-chaired by the United States and Russia, as we all know, brokered a cessation of hostilities that kicked in on February 27 that applies to all parties except ISIS and al-Nusra.

While we all hope and pray the ceasefire holds as it goes into the third week

and humanitarian groups gain access to sick, frail, and at-risk people, the atrocities committed against Syria's population demand accountability and justice.

There have been—I think I should point this out because many people who are following the news know this—numerous violations of the cease-fire by Assad and his forces.

In an opinion piece in *Newsweek* a few hours ago, it was noted that “regime forces are openly bombing and, in some cases, launching ground operations to capture key rebel territory without making any pretense of attacking the Nusra Front.”

Further, the Syria Ceasefire Monitor “reports 111 violations as of March 9—almost all perpetuated by the Assad regime or Russian forces.”

A Syrian court is needed for all the past, present, and—God forbid—likely future atrocities being committed in Syria.

Rigorous investigations by a new Syrian court, followed by prosecutions, convictions, and serious jail time for perpetrators of crime on all sides will not only hold those responsible for war crimes accountable, but will send a clear message that such barbaric behavior has dire personal consequences. The victims and their loved ones, Mr. Speaker, deserve no less.

Can a U.N. Security Council resolution establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal prevail? Yes, I believe. With a serious and sustained diplomatic push by the United States and other interested parties, past success in creating war crimes tribunals can, indeed, be prologue.

□ 1600

Notwithstanding Russia's solidarity with Serbia during the Balkan war, especially with Slobodan Milosevic, the International Criminal Court Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was unanimously approved. Ditto for the special court in Sierra Leone in 2002. The Rwanda tribunal was created in 1994, with China choosing to abstain rather than to veto that court.

At a Syrian war crimes court, no one on any side who commits genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity would be precluded from prosecution.

As I said, in the early 1990s, the Russians knew that the Yugoslav court was designed to hold all transgressors liable, whether they be Bosnian or Croats and not just Serbians and, again, they didn't veto that particular court as it was established.

I believe the Russians and the Chinese can be persuaded to support or at least abstain from blocking establishment of such a court.

An ad hoc or a regional court has significant advantages over the International Criminal Court, or the ICC, as a venue for justice. For starters, neither Syria nor the United States is a member of the ICC, although mechanisms exist to push prosecutions there.

The ICC, however, has operated since 2002, and only boasts of only two, two,

just two, convictions. By way of contrast, the Yugoslav court convicted 80 people; Rwanda, 61; and Sierra Leone, 9. Moreover, a singularly focused Syrian tribunal that provides Syrians with a degree of ownership could significantly enhance its effectiveness.

I chaired a Congressional hearing on establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal back in 2013, and included such great leaders as David Crane, the former prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and founder and chairman of the Syria Accountability Project.

Mr. Crane testified that the Syria Accountability Project has collected data “and built a framework by which President Assad and his henchmen”—this is his quote—“along with members of the opposition can be prosecuted openly and fairly.”

He and his team have “developed a crime base matrix which catalogs most of the incidents chronologically and highlights the violations of the Rome Statute, the Geneva Conventions, as well as domestic Syrian criminal law.”

Significantly, with respect to the ICC, Mr. Crane testified that “it lacks the capability and the political and diplomatic sophistication to handle such a mandate.”

Indeed, I would like to relay some words that I had with David Crane just a few hours ago; and he reminded us that it is important that the Congress continue the quest to seek justice for the oppressed and work on justice for the Syrian people, in particular, as we recall the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the civil war in that country. Tomorrow, March 15, marks the fifth anniversary of this horrific conflict.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, accountability that is aggressive, predictable, transparent, and applicable to all perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity on all sides of the divide must be pursued now.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to commend the gentleman from New Jersey for authoring and bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, Syria and much of Iraq face two great evils. ISIS is well-known to us, and its evil is established by them on their own Web sites every day.

The second evil is the extremist Shiite alliance, consisting of Iran, Assad, Hezbollah, and many of the Shiite militias based in Baghdad to Basra. And, of course, this Shiite alliance is aided by Russia, although today there were reports that give us a glimmer of hope that Russia will be diminishing its role in the Syrian conflict.

The Shiite extremist alliance, I believe, is even more dangerous than ISIS since they include two state actors and a nuclear program. And the extremist Shiite alliance has killed more Americans than ISIS, from the Marines who died in Lebanon in the 1980s, to the IEDs that were manufactured in Iran and deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is a substantial difference in style between these two evil forces. When ISIS kills people, they put the beheadings on YouTube. When Assad kills thousands with his barrel bombs, or even with chemical weapons there for a while, Assad had the good taste to deny it. But different styles do not mask the fact that we are confronted with two great evils; and this resolution, I think, is an important step in dealing with those evils.

This resolution condemns the gross violation of international law, perpetrated by the Assad regime and those forces supporting Assad, which have amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

We all hope that the current ceasefire holds and even holds better than it has, but 5 years of civil war in Syria has shown us the use of weapons we thought were relegated only to the history books, including chemical weapons used by the Syrian government against its own civilians.

Assad has conducted deliberate bombings of schools, hospitals, and humanitarian sites for the clear purpose of causing civilians to flee, and overall, he has conducted a brutal war that has killed hundreds of thousands of Syrians and sent millions fleeing the country.

He has been aided in this process by the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps, whose chief spokesman redisclosed just last week how proud the Revolutionary Guard Corps is of helping Assad and how Tehran is helping to finance both Hezbollah and the Shiite militias that are helping Assad.

The resolution before us today makes specific mention of the role that Iran and the Shiite extremist militias are playing, and that is an important part of the resolution. So I agree with the gentleman from New Jersey. It is time to show the people who are committing these war crimes that there will be a tribunal, that they will be personally held to account.

And while I would hope that would drive home a message that would be relevant both to those who direct ISIS and those surrounding Assad, I think it will have a bigger impact on the generals around Assad who do not view themselves as martyrs, but view themselves as powerful individuals in Syria who would wish to travel and enjoy the good life with money they have stolen and taken from the Syrian people.

So I do not see that I have any speakers on our side, and I have been notified that I should not expect any, and for that reason, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for his very eloquent remarks and strong support for this resolution. I urge support and passage of this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH)

that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 121, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEFINING CERTAIN ATROCITIES AS WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide", as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 75

Whereas Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for millennia;

Whereas the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and associated extremists are committing egregious atrocities against ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq and Syria, including Christians (including Assyrian Chaldean Syriac, Armenian, and Melkite communities, among others), Yezidis, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabae-Mandean, and Kaka'i, among others;

Whereas ISIL specifically targets these religious and ethnic minorities, intending to kill them or force their submission, conversion, or expulsion;

Whereas religious and ethnic minorities have been murdered, subjugated, forced to emigrate, and subjected to grievous bodily and psychological harm, kidnapping, human trafficking, torture, and rape;

Whereas ISIL engages in, and publicly argues in favor of, the sexual enslavement of non-Muslim women, including pre-pubescent girls;

Whereas ISIL atrocities against Christians, Yezidis, and other minorities have included mass murder, crucifixions, beheadings, rape, torture, enslavement, the kidnapping of children, and other violence deliberately calculated to eliminate their communities from the so-called Islamic State;

Whereas ISIL has deliberately destroyed and looted numerous cultural sites, religious shrines, churches, monasteries, and museums in order to eradicate the cultures of ethnic and religious minorities from the territory it attempts to control;

Whereas these atrocities have been undertaken with the specific intent to bring about

the eradication of those communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage;

Whereas ISIL operations have in fact driven minority religious and ethnic communities from their ancestral homelands;

Whereas under applicable international law referenced in section 2441 of Title 18 of the United States Code, murder, torture, mutilation, rape, cruel treatment, and hostage-taking of non-combatants constitute war crimes;

Whereas crimes against humanity, as defined by the International Military Tribunal convened at Nuremberg in 1945, and in various international instruments since then, include murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, as well as persecution on political, racial, or religious grounds in connection with such crimes;

Whereas the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed and ratified by the United States, defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group";

Whereas on August 7, 2014, Secretary of State John Kerry declared that "ISIL's campaign of terror against the innocent, including Yezidi and Christian minorities, and its grotesque and targeted acts of violence bear all the warning signs and hallmarks of genocide";

Whereas in August 2014, the United States conducted targeted airstrikes and humanitarian assistance operations to help break the siege of Mount Sinjar, saving the lives of thousands of Yezidi men, women, and children;

Whereas His Holiness, Pope Francis, has noted that "entire communities, especially—but not only—Christians and Yezidis have suffered and are still suffering inhuman violence because of their ethnic and religious identity" and that, for Christians being killed for their faith in the Middle East, "a form of genocide -- I insist on the word -- is taking place, and it must end";

Whereas a March 13, 2015, report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights detailed "acts of violence perpetrated [by ISIL] against civilians because of their affiliation or perceived affiliation to an ethnic or religious group" and stated that "[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of these incidents, considering the overall information, may constitute genocide";

Whereas in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on May 13, 2015, Dominican Sister Diana Momeka, whose convent was driven from Mosul, Iraq, described the ISIL offensive as "cultural and human genocide" and stated that today "[t]he only Christians that remain in the Plain of Nineveh are those who are held as hostages";

Whereas in December 2015, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide issued a report focused on the treatment of minorities in Nineveh from June to August 2014, which found that ISIL had "targeted civilians based on group identity, committing mass atrocities to control, expel, and exterminate ethnic and religious minorities" and, in that context, "com-

mitted crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing against [Christian, Yezidi, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabae-Mandean, and Kaka'i] communities in Nineva" and "perpetrated genocide against the Yezidi people";

Whereas on December 7, 2015, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom called on the United States Government "to designate the Christian, Yezidi, Shi'a, Turkmen, and Shabak communities of Iraq and Syria as victims of genocide by ISIL" and urged world leaders "to condemn the genocidal actions and crimes against humanity of ISIL that have been directed at these groups and other ethnic and religious groups";

Whereas on February 3, 2016, the European Parliament expressed the view that ISIL "is committing genocide against Christians and Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities";

Whereas Syrian President Bashar al Assad's violence against the Syrian people has attracted foreign fighters from around the world, who have supported and committed ISIL atrocities; and

Whereas according to some estimates, the conflict among all parties to the Syrian civil war has killed 470,000 and displaced 11,000,000 people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against Christians, Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(2) all governments, including the United States, and international organizations, including the United Nations and the Office of the Secretary-General, should call ISIL atrocities by their rightful names: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(3) the member states of the United Nations should coordinate urgently on measures to prevent further war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Iraq and Syria, and to punish those responsible for these ongoing crimes, including by the collection and preservation of evidence and, if necessary, the establishment and operation of appropriate tribunals;

(4) the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, the Republic of Turkey, and the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq are to be commended for, and supported in, their efforts to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence of ISIL and other combatants until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and Syria; and

(5) the protracted Syrian civil war and the indiscriminate violence of the Assad regime have contributed to the growth of ISIL and will continue to do so as long as this conflict continues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank JEFF FORTENBERRY and his lead cosponsor, ANNA ESHOO, for their extremely important resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended, calling on the Obama administration to declare the annihilation of Christians, Yazidis, and other minorities, for what it is, a genocide.

On December 4 of last year, a coalition of prominent religious leaders wrote President Obama and stated, "Christian and Yazidi minorities in Iraq and Syria are being targeted for eradication in their ancient homelands solely because of their religious beliefs."

They had been prompted by reports of an "imminent" State Department finding that ISIS was committing genocide against the Yazidis, a finding they "wholeheartedly" endorsed, but were "deeply troubled," like we all were, that the genocide of Christians was going to be bypassed or excluded.

Apparently press reports had claimed that the rationale for excluding Christians was that, unlike the Yazidis, Christians had a choice to convert to Islam and pay an Islamic tax, or be killed, tortured, enslaved, or held hostage.

In direct rebuttal of that argument at a hearing that I held on December 9, Carl Anderson, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, stated:

Many times the payment of the tax is not presented as an option for these Christians. In instances where the Yazidi tax has been enacted or extracted, it has failed to ensure that the Christians could live as Christians, that they were protected from rival jihadists, or even other members of ISIS, or that the amendment of payment was not raised over time until it became impossible for some of them to pay, causing the family's home, and even their children, to be confiscated, and the adults to be killed or forced to become Muslims.

It is a very, very poor argument that has been made by the State Department, so we believe they have made this. Hopefully, they will rectify it.

Let me also point out to my colleagues that the Genocide Convention defines genocide as "the killing and certain other acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group."

The religious leaders who signed the December 4 letter compiled extensive files supporting a finding that ISIS' treatment of Iraqi and Syrian Christians absolutely meets this definition. They include:

Evidence of ISIS assassinations of church leaders; mass murders; torture, kidnapping for ransom in the Christian communities of Iraq and Syria; sexual enslavement and systematic rape of Christian girls and women; its practices of forcible conversions to Islam; its destruction of churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and Christian artifacts; and its theft of lands and wealth from Christian clergy and laity alike.

They went on to cite "ISIS' own public statements taking credit for mass

murder of Christians, and expressing its intent eliminate Christian communities from the Islamic State."

The letter recounted how "ISIS jihadis have stamped Christian homes in Mosul with the red letter N for Nazarene in the summer of 2014," pointing out how the "elimination of Christians in other towns and cities in Iraq and Syria began long beforehand."

Mr. Speaker, I held a hearing 3 years ago extolling and urging the administration to recognize the genocide against Christians, and our witnesses, the private witnesses who spoke, gave instance after instance of crimes against Christians that were done simply because they were Christians.

At a December 9 hearing, we heard from four witnesses. I mentioned one a moment ago, Carl Anderson, from the Knights of Columbus. We also heard from Dr. Stanton, of Genocide Watch, who said, "Failure to call ISIS' mass murder of Christians, Shia, Muslims, and other groups in addition to the Yazidis by its proper name, genocide, would be an act of denial as grave as the U.S. refusal to recognize the Rwanda genocide back in 1994."

□ 1615

Bishop Kalabat, a Chaldean bishop, was extremely pointed in his remarks when he said that "the Obama administration, including President Obama himself, have neglected to mention that the ISIS atrocities were committed against Christians. They rightly mention atrocities committed in Iraq against the Yazidis, and they are horrific." The bishop went on, "But there are also atrocities of rape, killings, crucifixions, beheadings, hangings that the Syrian and Iraqi Christians have endured, and they are intentionally omitted." He compellingly stated that "the U.S. Government should not turn a blind eye to the genocidal atrocities faced by Iraq's ethnic and religious minorities, including the Christians, the Yazidis, and others."

Finally, in very, very powerful testimony, the head of Yazidi Human Rights Organization-International, Mr. Ismail, stated that though his people, the Yazidis, were on the verge of annihilation, he called upon the administration not to neglect the others who are also on the verge of annihilation, and said, "the Yazidis and the Chaldo-Assyrian Christians face this genocide together."

Now is the time to act. We cannot let the cries of the victims go unheeded as we once did when we confronted the genocide in Rwanda and other genocides that have occurred around the world. Mr. Speaker, I therefore urge my colleagues to vote for H. Con. Res. 75.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution deals with the crimes of ISIS.

I want to thank my colleague from California, ANNA ESHOO, and our colleague from Nebraska, JEFF FORTENBERRY, for their drafting of this resolution which I and so many others have cosponsored, and I want to thank the chair and ranking member of our committee for their work in preparing the amendment that we adopted in committee.

This resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, identifies the violent acts of ISIS by their right name: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and, where appropriate, genocide. We could and will be conducting a complete analysis in the future to identify which atrocities of ISIS are merely war crimes and which atrocities of ISIS are part of an overall systemic genocide. But it is clear that at least some of the war crimes are part of a planned genocide against religious minorities in the areas that ISIS occupies.

This resolution also includes a call upon the United States and all the states of the U.N. to conduct measures designed to prevent these crimes and genocide in the future. Now, it is said that People of the Book, most relevantly Christians, are being told by ISIS that they only have to pay a jizya and they will be allowed to live, a special tax imposed upon them. But the fact is that we know that the Yazidis are not even given that option but are subject to extermination; whereas, Christians may be told to pay the tax and then, when they run out of money, be executed because they are not paying more. So we know that ISIS is guilty of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.

In addition to passing this resolution, we ought to focus on the most significant thing the United States is doing against ISIS, and that, of course, is our airstrikes. I believe our airstrikes have been subject to rules of engagement that are far too limited. For example, we have learned that we try to cut off ISIS' flow of money by hitting the tanker trucks that are taking the oil out of ISIS areas for sale, but we are only hitting those trucks when they are parked, not when they are moving.

It is true that, if you hit a moving truck, you may kill the driver, and that driver may be an ISIS soldier or may be a civilian; but if you look at the strategic bombing that we engaged in during World War II, not just the strategic bombing of Germany, but the strategic bombing of occupied France and occupied Belgium and so many other occupied countries, you will see that we hit munitions plants and transportation tanker trucks whether or not those people operating the transportation devices and operating in the munitions plants were civilian or military.

If we are going to get serious against ISIS, we have to be willing not to target civilians but, instead, to do everything we can to prevent killing civilians; but we have to be willing to hit

strategic targets even if we are not 100 percent sure that all civilian casualties will be avoided.

So I look forward to our working both diplomatically and militarily for the destruction of ISIS and eventually holding ISIS' leaders to account for their war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), the author of H. Con. Res 75.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank my colleague and good friend, Congressman CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, for his tireless efforts on a whole, broad spectrum of assaults on human dignity. He is constantly trying to elevate the conscience of this body and the worldwide community. I thank the chairman, as well, for coordinating this effort and speaking favorably to it, as well as Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, who passed this through the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I need to also, because she is not here, thank ANNA ESHOO, a Democratic colleague from California.

We are living in a time when our country looks at Congress and sees stagnation, anger, and gridlock and not being able to get things done. What we have before us today is a transpartisan resolution. It has risen above the petty and difficult differences that we often work out here on the floor of the House of Representatives. It has risen above it because of its essential nature. Not only is there a grave injustice happening in the Middle East to the people, to the Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities who have as much a right to be in their ancient homeland as anyone else, but this is a threat against civilization itself.

When a group of people, ISIS—8th century barbarians with 21st century weapons—can systematically try to exterminate another group of people simply because of their faith tradition, violating the sacred space of individuality, conscience, and religious liberty, you undermine the entire system for international order building out of rule of law and proper social interaction—civilization itself. That is why so many Members have come together here in a bipartisan, transpartisan way and said, "Enough."

This is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis. It is a crime against humanity and against others, as well, who are suffering because of their religious faith.

By the way, it should be noted that the group of people who have been most killed by ISIS are innocent Muslims, as well.

This is an important resolution to speak clearly about what is happening in the land.

Why is it important? Because it raises the international consciousness,

and it compels the responsible communities of the world to act. Secondly, it creates the potential preconditions for when there is a security settlement in the Middle East that will allow these ancient faith traditions to reintegrate back into their homeland and continue to contribute to the once-rich tapestry that made up the Middle East.

That is why this is so essential. It is just. The responsible communities of the world must act, and it is essential for international order and international stability if there is going to be a chance for any type of hope and long-lasting viability of order and tranquility in that area.

As my colleague, Mr. SMITH, mentioned, Genocide Watch has labeled this genocide. The International Association of Genocide Scholars has called this genocide. The Yazidi Human Rights Organization-International has said this is genocide. Pope Francis has said that this is genocide and has decried the scandal of silence and the scandal of indifference in this regard—again, another reason why action by this body is so essential.

In addition to that, I want to leave you with one quick story.

I represent the largest Yazidi community in America. I have been dealing with this community for many, many years, many of whom resettled in Lincoln, Nebraska, because they were given special visas to come to America because they worked side by side with our soldiers during the Iraq war as translators. Because of the grave threat that they were under, they were given special privileges to become citizens here, and many settled in my State of Nebraska, my hometown, Lincoln.

I have been working with the community for a number of years about a number of concerns. About a year and a half ago, a group came to see me. Young men who had worked as translators were on the verge of tears. They were passionate and angry. I don't blame them for being angry. Their mothers, their sisters, and their family members were trapped on Mount Sinjar. They were pleading with me: Congressman, act. Do something now. We can't wait.

To the Obama administration's credit, shortly thereafter—and the House had passed a resolution creating some groundwork for trying to stop the annihilation of Yazidis—the Obama administration, President Obama, acted, and I am thankful for that.

This week we have an opportunity to continue to plead and urge the State Department to act as well. I know they are under an evaluation as to this real genocide that is happening. I respect their process, but I think the facts are clear; and it is my sincere hope that Secretary Kerry and the State Department will meet their lawful deadline this week and declare this fact: there is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis, and civilization itself is at stake.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for yielding me the time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Mr. FORTENBERRY for his very eloquent remarks and for reminding us that this is an existential threat to Christians, but really, as well, to civilization. I thank him again for the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Staten Island, New York (Mr. DONOVAN). He is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for allowing me this time to express and rise in support of H. Con. Res. 75.

When considering the long history of civilization, we look back in horror at the unimaginable pain mankind is capable of inflicting on itself, and each succeeding generation wonders how a people stood idly by as warring factions destroyed innocent life and property.

Last year, the world watched a beach turned red as executioners sawed off the heads of 21 Coptic Christians on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Two weeks ago, terrorists stormed a retirement home full of nuns caring for the elderly and frail. And in the months in between, ISIS systemically killed or enslaved thousands of Yazidi people.

Scripture speaks of perseverance and endurance in faith under siege and not growing weary. Matthew says:

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of their righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

But that doesn't excuse our silence. Political correctness cannot stand in the way of our moral obligation as a free and decent people. I support the resolution and hope we can have the moral conviction to call this massacre what it is: genocide.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, ISIS, this evil group, has been intentionally targeting Christians worldwide because of their religious belief. ISIS not only targets Christians, it targets any religious group, including some Muslims who disagree with them.

As the previous speaker from New York mentioned, they are proud of the fact that they murder people, that they behead people, and that they put their murders on television for the world to see. These atrocities committed by this terrorist group in the name of a perverted jihad religion are the worst crimes we have seen in our lifetime.

More than that, ISIS' massacres of religious and ethnic minorities fits the definition of genocide. The definition of genocide is clear. It is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial or cultural group. That is exactly what ISIS is doing. ISIS has already forced hundreds of thousands of Christians to leave their ancestral homes.

□ 1630

For the first time since Jesus, there are almost no Christians left in this part of the world. There were 1.5 million Christians in Iraq in 2003—1.5 million. Since that time, terrorists have either killed or forced Christians to run for their lives.

Today, 13 years later, there are 66 percent fewer Christians in this area. Some of those who could not get out before ISIS came in and took over their areas have been tortured, crucified, executed, and murdered in the most inhumane possible ways, tortured because of their belief.

ISIS has not only targeted Christians, it has targeted other communities. The Yazidi community of Iraq has been tortured. ISIS slaughtered almost all of the men in one community on Mount Sinjar and then sold the women and the girls off into slavery, this demonic desire of theirs, and gave them to their fighters. It is just another example of tragic cases of genocide in world history.

ISIS will not stop, Mr. Speaker, exterminating these people, until they bow down to their ideology, and their ideology is based on hate. ISIS does not just target those under its control. The terrorists seek to cleanse the world, the whole world, from all people who do not accept their belief, including other Muslims.

It is time the United States and the rest of the world make it clear to all what ISIS is doing. We must denounce murder, this genocide, that is occurring because of people's religious belief.

I am glad that this resolution is coming forward. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 75.

Mr. Speaker, justice demands ISIS be held accountable for what it does. Justice must be done. After all, isn't justice what we do in the United States?

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Texas for his speech and the gentleman from Nebraska who spoke earlier for his introduction of this resolution, along with my colleague, ANNA ESHOO, from California. And, of course, I commend CHRIS SMITH for a lifetime of work on human rights.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to close.

I thank my good friend, Mr. SHERMAN, for his good, bipartisan, strong remarks expressed today during both of these debates on the war crimes tribunal and now on Mr. FORTENBERRY'S

genocide resolution, another bipartisan piece of legislation.

I want to thank my colleagues for their moving words today. Judge POE, again, hit the nail right on the head, as did our friend from New York.

I think we need to say it and we need to say it with exclamation points, that declaring genocide is a solemn and extremely serious step not to be taken lightly.

I am very proud of the work that the Foreign Affairs Committee did. I want to thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, and the ranking member, ELIOT ENGEL, for their work on this resolution.

All of us understand the seriousness of calling crimes genocide. It represents an assertion that a legal definition has been met and that we are witnessing acts of physical and mental violence intended to destroy a group in whole or in part.

The targeted depravity of ISIS against the Yazidis, Christians, and other minorities more—I will say it again—more than meets that definition.

But far more than the legality, speaking clearly of genocide, is an appeal to the conscience of the world. It evokes the moral gravity and the imperative of never again.

The United States must not wait any longer to find its voice and call these bloody purges what they are: genocide. We and our partners must defeat ISIS so that Christians, Yazidis, all religious communities, and all the people of Syria and Iraq, can live in peace, free from this grotesque persecution.

I urge passage of the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2426

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Safety, security and peace is important to every citizen of the world, and shared information ensuring wide assistance among police authorities of nations for expeditious dissemination of information regarding criminal activities greatly assists in these efforts.

(2) Direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities. Internationally shared information with authorized police authorities is vital to peace-keeping efforts.

(3) With a history dating back to 1914, the role of INTERPOL is defined in its constitution: "To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

(4) Ongoing international threats, including international networks of terrorism, show the ongoing necessity to be ever inclusive of nations willing to work together to combat criminal activity. The ability of police authorities to coordinate, preempt, and act swiftly and in unison is an essential element of crisis prevention and response.

(5) Taiwan maintained full membership in INTERPOL starting in 1964 through its National Police Administration but was ejected in 1984 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

(6) Nonmembership prevents Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global police communications system, which provides real-time information on criminals and global criminal activities. Taiwan is relegated to second-hand information from friendly nations, including the United States.

(7) Taiwan is unable to swiftly share information on criminals and suspicious activity with the international community, leaving a huge void in the global crime-fighting efforts and leaving the entire world at risk.

(8) The United States, in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, declared its intention to support Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations and has consistently reiterated that support.

(9) Following the enactment of Public Law 108-235, a law authorizing the Secretary of State to initiate and implement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly and subsequent advocacy by the United States, Taiwan was granted observer status to the World Health Assembly for six consecutive years since 2009. Both prior to and in its capacity as an observer, Taiwan has contributed significantly to the international community's collective efforts in pandemic control, monitoring, early warning, and other related matters.

(10) INTERPOL's constitution allows for observers at its meetings by "police bodies which are not members of the Organization".

(b) TAIWAN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERPOL.—The Secretary of State shall—

(1) develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter; and

(2) instruct INTERPOL Washington to officially request observer status for Taiwan in

INTERPOL and to actively urge INTERPOL member states to support such observer status and participation for Taiwan.

(C) REPORT CONCERNING OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN INTERPOL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall transmit to Congress a report, in unclassified form, describing the United States strategy to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter. The report shall include the following:

(1) A description of the efforts the Secretary has made to encourage member states to promote Taiwan's bid to obtain observer status in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL.

(2) A description of the actions the Secretary will take to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of S. 2426, the Senate version of a bill that previously passed the House with strong bipartisan support.

I especially want to commend Chairman MATT SALMON for authoring the House version of this important measure and Senator GARDNER for doing the same on the Senate side. Their leadership on this issue is much appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today will help secure observer status for Taiwan at INTERPOL. The bill requires the Secretary of State to develop and execute a strategy to ensure that Taiwan participates in INTERPOL's next general assembly meeting in Indonesia. With this piece of legislation, we are sending a clear message that safety and security are a priority.

Taiwan, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, is a model of democratization and openness, a thriving nation of 23 million people. Its successful transition from authoritarianism to a thriving democracy is a shining example for so many other nations.

The sole reason that Taiwan is excluded from the international organizations is the persistent opposition of the communist government of mainland China.

But China's opposition puts politics over the safety and security of people. In a world where terrorism and international drug and human trafficking networks are global in scope, the response must be coordinated globally as well.

At this time, Taiwan relies on delayed, secondhand information from the United States about international criminals and criminal activities, making it more vulnerable to security threats. Likewise, Taiwan cannot share

the law enforcement information it gathers to the benefit of INTERPOL members.

It makes no sense to exclude Taiwan from INTERPOL due to a political pique, just as it makes no sense to exclude Taiwan from the World Health Organization, another example of the government of mainland China putting politics over the health and safety of people.

But there is another reason for having a good global citizen such as Taiwan as a member of INTERPOL: INTERPOL is an organization that is in need of reform.

A number of authoritarian countries abuse the INTERPOL red notice system not against criminals, but to harass political dissidents and exiles who are unable to travel internationally for fear that they will be arrested and face extradition in their home country, where they suffer persecution, imprisonment, and even death.

For example, Jacob Ostreicher, a legitimate American businessman who was the victim of an extortion ring involving corrupt Bolivian Government officials and jailed in Bolivia, a matter on which my subcommittee held three hearings and for which I traveled to Bolivia with our colleague NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, has, since his return to the United States, discovered that he has been red-noticed by vindictive Bolivian Government officials.

The red notice effectively prevents him from traveling abroad. He is currently going through a time-consuming and costly process to clear his name.

To help encourage reform at INTERPOL, we should welcome democracies such as Taiwan.

I also believe strengthening Taiwan's law enforcement capabilities benefits American citizens as much as it does the Taiwanese.

Every year, Mr. Speaker, tens of thousands of Americans travel to Taiwan, and this bill will certainly help Taiwan's police protect American citizens and other internationalists as they travel to Taiwan. It is a good bill. It is an important bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of this bill. Just to put the legislative history in the RECORD, the House passed H.R. 1853 overwhelmingly late last year. In fact, the vote on this floor was 392-0.

We sent the bill to the Senate. Instead of acting on the House bill, the Senate xeroxed our bill, put their own name on it, and now sends it back here.

If I was driven by ego, I might try to serve in the other body. But the decision to send the bill back to us with their own names on it is a trend we are seeing in the Foreign Affairs area, a trend that I do not condemn because it allows us here on this floor to consider well-drafted House bills twice and to vote on them twice and to emphasize to the administration how serious we are about their being enacted.

I want to thank the Senate author for his decision that we consider this bill a second time. The vote last time was 392-0. My hope is that we have a similar vote today.

I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for describing why this bill is important. Since I have previously commented how important it is that we discuss Foreign Affairs bills not once, but twice, on the floor of this House, I would be remiss if I did not add my own comments.

When this bill was introduced in the House, it was by the chair and ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. SALMON and myself.

I appreciate the Senate commending our draftsmanship, since imitation is the most sincere form of flattery.

Why is this bill necessary? Because Taiwan functions day to day as an independent country and it needs to function in that manner inside international organizations.

To date, Taiwan has been admitted to only one international organization, the World Health Organization, and there it has only observer status.

The fiction that Taiwan acts as, functions as, a part of China complicates and interferes with so many international organizations, but it should not be allowed to interfere with law enforcement against criminal gangs and international criminal syndicates.

As things stand now, Taiwan gets some of the information it needs from the international police organization known as INTERPOL, but it is not consistently made available. It is not reliable.

Taiwan doesn't have realtime access to INTERPOL's networks and systems. This doesn't just hurt the people of Taiwan, but hurts people all over the world who are potential victims of criminals who cannot be apprehended because we don't have an efficient sharing of information as part of this multilateral law enforcement agency.

It is for this reason that the bill directs the President to develop a strategy to obtain at least observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, or INTERPOL.

I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for managing this bill here today, and I commend the chairman of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. SALMON, for introducing this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1645

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, before I left Houston early this morning, I met with President Ma from Taiwan, and we had an interesting and wonderful discussion.

Taiwan and the United States share a lot in common. Historically, during World War II, for example, all the way up until today, the United States has been a great partner with Taiwan so as to make sure that area of the world is free, that it is a democracy. It is a thriving democracy and the folks in Taiwan are proud of the fact of the relationship that they have with the United States. This is another way that we can help this thriving area, this thriving democracy, stay up to date on the world criminal gangs that are roaming throughout the world.

Organized crime is an international crime now, Mr. Speaker, as you being a former judge would know. They are more sophisticated and they are more in-depth about how they promote their criminal syndicates throughout the world. Most importantly, it is international. Crime has now moved to sophistication beyond what it was when both the gentleman from Tennessee and I were practicing at the courthouse as judges.

Why not help out this organization, this group of people—Taiwan, 20 million-plus individuals—so that it can keep up with the information and the intelligence about crime, which affects the whole world?

It affects not only free societies, it affects societies that aren't so free.

INTERPOL is the group. It is the organization that tracks international crime. Taiwan should have this information. It should have at least observer status to know what is going on with these criminal syndicates throughout the world. China doesn't want Taiwan to have INTERPOL access or even observer status. It is a political thing for China. As my friend from New Jersey mentioned, China, it would seem, would want Taiwan to have access to information about criminals—or outlaws, as we call them.

This is an important piece of legislation. As the ranking member pointed out so eloquently, it is such a good piece of legislation that the Senate just copied it, put its name on it, and sent it back to us because it wants us to vote on it twice. We will vote on it twice and we will show all concerned, especially the folks in Taiwan and the international community, that we support its right to know the information about criminals that lurk throughout the world.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Taiwan already missed the INTERPOL General Assembly meeting that took place last fall in Kigali, Rwanda. Our hope is that with the passage of this bill, the United States will be able to figure out a way for Taiwan to observe the General Assembly meeting later this year in Indonesia.

It is time that we insist that Taiwan be an observer to INTERPOL so that

everyone can benefit from increased safety and security. Blocking Taiwan from INTERPOL is not in the interest of any nation. And as Judge POE just mentioned a moment ago, even the People's Republic of China would benefit because this is all about trying to catch and to inhibit criminals from moving effortlessly across borders; so it is in its interest as well not to block Taiwan.

I urge my colleagues to support the Salmon-Sherman bill which is before us today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of S. 2426, directing the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

Last year, I supported H.R. 1853, which passed here in the House of Representatives, directing the Administration to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and for other purposes.

As the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, the empowerment of law enforcement in order that they be able to carry out their mandate in upholding the rule of law and preservation of peace and security are imperatives I believe we must continue to seek to facilitate here in the homeland as well as in the global community from Nigeria to Taiwan and everywhere in between to maintain global stability and combat violent extremism.

Our world today is fraught with global terrorism, with groups such as ISIL, Boko Haram, al-Shabab and their other affiliates, utilizing information sharing and technologies to advance their vitriolic causes.

This is why organizing, inclusion and empowerment of nations willing to work together to combat domestic and global terrorism is in our global and national security interest.

This measure facilitates the United States' and the global community's ability to move swiftly to empower police and law enforcement in our collective efforts of coordinating, preempting and acting swiftly in unison, strategically in combatting terrorism, crisis prevention and response and maintaining, peace, security, law, order and respect for the rule of law.

I join this bipartisan measure which seeks to facilitate INTERPOL member states' efforts to promote Taiwan's ability to bid to obtain observer status in the INTERPOL.

Indeed, since 1964, Taiwan had maintained full membership, but was ejected 20 years later when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

Part of what the United States Administration can do is to take the lead in endorsing Taiwan in obtaining its observer status.

Let me underscore that the Administration and our Secretary of State are doing a fantastic job in diplomatic efforts on behalf of our nation, earning us goodwill in the global community.

The United States has expressed its affirmative intentions in support of Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations, as delineated in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review.

For instance, Public Law 108-235 authorized the Secretary of State to initiate and im-

plement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status at the annual World Health Assembly for six consecutive years, owing to Taiwan's significant contribution to the global community's efforts of addressing pandemic control and global public health issues of our day.

Indeed, the INTERPOL's constitution allows observer status at meetings by police entities who are not members of the Organization.

The current status of non-membership status precludes Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global communications systems, an important real time information sharing infrastructure on domestic and global criminals.

The current state of affairs relegates Taiwan to hearsay or second hand information from friendly nations such as the United States.

This impedes Taiwan's ability to move swiftly in information acquisition as it relates to its domestic and global crime fighting efforts.

As a senior member of the Committee on Homeland Security, global and national security efforts and infrastructures that promote global communications to achieve peace and stability are very important to me.

This measure seeks to protect our security interests in Taiwan as well as the global security of the world.

Taiwan's inaccessibility to critical information readily made available to its law enforcement forces places our entire world at risk.

This measure seeks to facilitate Taiwan's direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police which promotes global security.

I support and urge the support of this measure because it is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities to be able to share information with authorized police authorities in their law enforcement and peacekeeping efforts in combatting local and global crimes, including the contemporary crime of violent extremism.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this measure, which would direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, also known as INTERPOL.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, I support the dynamic U.S.-Taiwan relationship based on our shared values, deep economic ties, and a history of close collaboration.

Gaining observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL would further enhance U.S.-Taiwan relations and provide for a pragmatic integration of Taiwan into an international compact.

Taiwan's contributions to INTERPOL will strengthen law enforcement initiatives to fight human trafficking, arms smuggling, terrorism, and other criminal threats.

Integrating Taiwan into an international law enforcement body like INTERPOL increases communication and information sharing to the benefit of the people of Taiwan and INTERPOL member countries.

This is a practical step that serves the interests of the U.S., Taiwan, and INTERPOL, and I would urge my colleagues to support this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2426.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4721) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4721

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

Sec. 101. Extension of airport improvement program.

Sec. 102. Extension of expiring authorities.

Sec. 103. Federal Aviation Administration operations.

Sec. 104. Air navigation facilities and equipment.

Sec. 105. Research, engineering, and development.

Sec. 106. Funding for aviation programs.

Sec. 107. Essential air service.

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

Sec. 201. Expenditure authority from Airport and Airway Trust Fund.

Sec. 202. Extension of taxes funding Airport and Airway Trust Fund.

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 48103(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “and \$1,675,000,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016” and inserting “and \$2,645,218,579 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016”.

(2) OBLIGATION OF AMOUNTS.—Subject to limitations specified in advance in appropriation Acts, sums made available pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) may be obligated at any time through September 30, 2016, and shall remain available until expended.

(3) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—For purposes of calculating funding apportionments and meeting other requirements under sections 47114, 47115, 47116, and 47117 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning

on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(A) first calculate such funding apportionments on an annualized basis as if the total amount available under section 48103 of such title for fiscal year 2016 were \$3,350,000,000; and

(B) then reduce by 21 percent—

(i) all funding apportionments calculated under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) amounts available pursuant to sections 47117(b) and 47117(f)(2) of such title.

(b) PROJECT GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “March 31, 2016,” and inserting “July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 102. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) Section 41743(e)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence by inserting “and \$3,948,087 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,” before “to carry out this section”.

(b) Section 47107(r)(3) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “April 1, 2016” and inserting “July 16, 2016”.

(c) Section 47115(j) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(d) Section 47124(b)(3)(E) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “and not more than \$5,175,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,” and inserting “and not more than \$8,172,541 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

(e) Section 47141(f) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(f) Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016,” and inserting “July 15, 2016.”

(g) Section 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (49 U.S.C. 41731 note) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(h) Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(i) Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(j) The amendments made by this section shall take effect on March 31, 2016.

SEC. 103. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS.

Section 106(k) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1)(E) and inserting the following:

“(E) \$7,824,891,355 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”; and

(2) in paragraph (3) by striking “March 31, 2016,” and inserting “July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 104. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a)(5) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(5) \$2,254,357,923 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 105. RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102(a)(9) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(9) \$131,076,503 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 106. FUNDING FOR AVIATION PROGRAMS.

The budget authority authorized in this Act, including the amendments made by this

Act, shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subsections (a)(1)(B) and (a)(2) of section 48114 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.

SEC. 107. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

Section 41742(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “and \$77,500,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,” and inserting “and \$138,183,060 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “April 1, 2016” in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and inserting “April 1, 2017”; and

(B) by striking the semicolon at the end of subparagraph (A) and inserting “or the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016 or any specified extension;”, and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) SPECIFIED EXTENSION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term ‘specified extension’ means any provision of law enacted after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and before April 1, 2017, but only to the extent that such provision of law provides for the extension (including authorization of additional amounts) of an existing authority (determined as of the date of the enactment of this paragraph) for a period ending not later than March 31, 2017, under one or more of the following:

“(A) Section 106, 41742, 41743, 47104, 47107, 47114, 47115, 47116, 47117, 47124, 47141, 48101, 48102, 48103, or 48114 of title 49, United States Code.

“(B) Section 186(d) or 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act.

“(C) Section 140(c)(1), 411(h), or 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking “April 1, 2016” and inserting “April 1, 2017”.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking “April 1, 2016” and inserting “April 1, 2017”.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to

include extraneous materials on H.R. 4721.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4721, the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016.

This bill extends the authorization of the Federal Aviation Administration programs through July 15, 2016. The bill also extends the revenue collection authorities for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through March 31, 2017. The current FAA authorization expires at the end of this month.

Without this bill, the authority to collect aviation taxes will lapse, depriving the trust fund of more than \$30 million per day. That is \$30 million a day for air traffic control, airport development, and other aviation programs that can never be recovered.

Additionally, airports will be unable to receive grant money that has already been awarded to them, putting dozens of construction projects across the country at risk of delay, cost overrun, or cancellation.

H.R. 4721 will avoid these unnecessary consequences while Congress works to finish a long-term aviation bill.

On February 11, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved H.R. 4441, the Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act, or the AIRR Act.

The AIRR Act provides the transformational reform we need to modernize our antiquated air traffic control systems; to ensure the system is safe and efficient; and to ensure the U.S. leads the world in aviation.

The AIRR Act takes ATC out of the Federal bureaucracy and establishes an independent, not-for-profit corporation to provide and modernize ATC service. This corporation will be governed by an independent board and representatives of the public interest. This independent entity will provide a service. It will not be given the public airspace.

And the FAA will continue to be our Nation's aviation safety regulator. Let me stress that the FAA will continue to be the Nation's aviation safety regulator and that Congress will have full oversight over that entity.

The bill includes protections for general aviation and for service to rural communities. This structure gets ATC away from political infighting and from an FAA management structure that has wasted billions of dollars in trying to modernize the system.

I believe this reform will benefit passengers first, our communities, all system users, and will ultimately save taxpayers and the traveling public billions of dollars.

The AIRR Act also streamlines the FAA certification process so as to improve America's competitiveness and to protect jobs. It includes a robust safety title, protects investment in air-

port infrastructure, and promotes passenger service reforms.

We have worked every step of the way under an open process in order to address concerns and find common ground to move forward. In the markup, the committee approved 44 amendments, mostly on a bipartisan basis, to make the AIRR Act a better bill; but our work isn't done yet. With so much at stake, it is critical that we get this reform right.

We are working with Members in the House to get the ball over the goal line. Last week, Members of the Senate Commerce Committee introduced its FAA reauthorization bill, and I look forward to working with Chairman THUNE. We have worked well with the Senate Commerce Committee on the highway bill, on passenger rail reform, and on a Surface Transportation Board reauthorization. I believe we can be successful on an aviation bill as well.

I am confident that we can produce a transformational FAA bill that will restore our global leadership position in aviation and ensure that the United States has the safest, most efficient aviation system in the world. In the meantime, we need to pass this short-term extension, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Here we are in the first or second short-term extension of the FAA, hopefully the last. The Senate has introduced a bill and I have had an opportunity to review the Senate bill. If you put the bills side by side, you will find very substantial agreement. In fact, there is very substantial agreement in the House over many of the critical provisions of the bill that relate to safety, to the future regulation of drones, to flight attendant risk, and numerous other provisions that were agreed upon during the markup.

The one major disagreement between the House and the Senate bills is the same disagreement that exists here in the House, which is over the privatization of the air traffic operations in this country.

I am not going to regurgitate the entire debate again here on the floor. The point is, with both bills being so similar, absent privatization, we could move well within the temporary extension.

In fact, we could probably have a bill done—well, we are not here very much. Congress is having, I think, a record few number of legislative days this year—but whenever we are going to be around again. I think there is a week in April and maybe a couple of days in May when we are going to be here and we could get this done. That seems to me to be the more prudent course.

The chairman and I do agree on what needs to be addressed at the FAA. First off, the biggest problem the FAA has is the United States Congress—the stupid shutdowns, sequestration, and other things which have interrupted critical

work, including procurement, and which have certainly interrupted the orderly operation of the air traffic control system.

How do we protect the FAA from Congress and idiots who want to shut down the government?

That is a tough one. I propose mandatory spending. The FAA is virtually self-funding. With the current tax structure and without adopting a controversial new private fee structure that would be put through by the non-profit corporation, the existing tax structure can pay for virtually 100 percent of the FAA, as it is, on an ongoing basis. If we adopted some efficiencies with a couple of other reforms, it would be in very, very robust shape and we would no longer have to rebut the idiocy of government shutdowns.

Now, there are certainly other parts of the government I care about that shouldn't be shut down, but at least mandatory spending here, like with Social Security checks and veterans' benefits, would say no, this is critical; it will continue even if, for some reason, Congress is so dysfunctional as to shut down funding for the government.

Secondly, procurement. Congress has been trying to reform procurement at the FAA since 1996. Unfortunately, back then, Congress didn't mandate procurement reforms. They merely gave the FAA license to depart from Federal procurement procedures if they so wished. In the end, unfortunately, either through the initiative of the FAA's or perhaps of some of the people down at the Office of Management and Budget, the procurement reforms were not done. In fact, they ended up with a system that is pretty much the same as the other, which is perhaps even less functional than those of other Federal agencies.

Finally, personnel. Again, in 1996—20 years ago—Congress, in recognizing this problem, gave the FAA the opportunity, the discretion, to adopt different personnel procedures, particularly as it relates to the mid-level bureaucratic bulge in the agency which does lead to some analysis, paralysis, and other problems that slow down needed measures or actions by the FAA.

I offered a very simple amendment that addressed those three things. It shouldn't be controversial. It says let the FAA fund itself with the existing tax structure and make that mandatory spending so we never shut them down again. Let's have procurement reforms and personnel reforms that are mandatory.

□ 1700

Unfortunately, that amendment failed and, instead, this privatization proposal prevailed. But that now has brought us to this point where, what is the path forward?

Okay. We are now going to extend this agency temporarily until just before the longest summer break in history for Congress. Well, I guess back in

the 1940s and 1950s they used to take the summers off. But at least since the invention and installation of air-conditioning, it is the longest summer break in history.

So we have to get it done before then. Otherwise, Congress won't be back until sometime in September for a couple of days when it is not likely to do any major legislation.

The stability and the predictability that we need with the FAA, the reforms we need—not just the ones I mentioned, but the reforms in drones, the reforms to give flight attendants the same mandatory rest hours and many, many other provisions—that are in agreement between the House and the Senate should not have to wait.

So I would hope that we won't drag this out until just before Congress adjourns and, instead, that we move forward with all dispatch after the Senate acts this week, if the Senate acts this week—you never can predict the Senate—and begin to correlate the few differences that I see between the bills.

Then, at some point, I think it will be time to give up on the privatization proposal and move forward and put this bill into place.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of points to point out. Again, we talk about privatization, but this is a not-for-profit corporation that is going to be governed by the stakeholders.

The government will have representatives, and the others that use the system will be on there to make sure that this entity operates in the most efficient, safe manner possible. Just to point out, over 50 countries around the world have done this and they have done it successfully.

As the gentleman points out, in the bill that we passed, there is much agreement, but there are significant differences on this point.

The gentleman also points out, which I agree with, Congress is part of the problem. It is not just the bureaucrats at FAA. It is the way Congress funds things.

His solution to mandatory spending, though, I would oppose significantly because that takes the Congress out of the equation. It gives the FAA money.

They will get it automatically without Congress going through appropriations or any kind of real oversight by Congress. If it comes down to it, it will be very difficult to change. The track record is very, very clear.

As the gentleman points out, over time we have reformed over and over and over, given the FAA the ability to do things that other agencies don't have.

But to paraphrase my good friend and colleague from Oregon who has said this a number of times, the only agency worse than the Department of Defense for procurement is the FAA. They just can't get it right. And Congress is an accomplice in that failure.

So, again, that reform I think will go great distances to make this a modern FAA system, to be able to get it to operate with the GPS-based systems, give us much more capacity, improve the airspace, decrease the time it takes to fly places for the traveling public, and decrease the amount of energy burned up, which will be good for the environment.

Again, I will continue to work with my colleagues and with the Senate to try to do something, which, really, its time has come, to significantly reform the FAA and do something that, again, over 50 countries have done. Britain, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, our allies around the world have done it successfully and with very, very safe results.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, well, let's just set the record straight. Only two countries have privatized. That is Canada and Great Britain.

In the case of Great Britain, the government and the taxpayers had to come in and bail out the corporation. In the case of Canada, it was a very prolonged transition, 7 or 8 years, which would set back NextGen for a generation. So those were not without their problems.

There is a MITRE report, which looks at all of the other conversions around the world which were government corporations, not private corporations. So there are only two that have gone to private corporations.

All the other countries that have changed over have gone to government corporations, and they also had transition issues. I mean, it is very instructive.

We haven't held hearings on the MITRE report or the recent GAO report that point to the potential for disruption and seeing that this proposal won't cause the sorts of disruptions that happened in other countries.

On the issue of mandatory spending, we would still, as the authorizers, have the authority to direct that agency much more so than we will have if we give it to a private corporation.

According to the most recent CBO report, they deem that this corporation will be mandatory spending and it will be a private corporation which will have the authority to tax.

So we are giving authority to a private corporation to establish some sort of a fee or tax structure—they can't tax; so it will be fees of some sort—a fee for the amount of space that you take up in an airplane when you are flying over the country—who knows what those fees will be—we don't know—which would be potentially disruptive and potentially disadvantage other users of the system, which is why you have all the regional airlines that fly 62 percent of the flights every day opposed to this bill.

You have Delta Air Lines, the largest airline, opposed to bill. You have the

Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association opposed to this bill. You have business aviation opposed to this proposal because they don't know what this fee structure will be and how it might or might not discriminate against them.

So what I propose is that you keep the existing structure, which everybody can live with. Now, the airlines don't like it because every time I buy an airline ticket and I pay the excise tax, the airlines say that is their money.

I say no. That is actually a tax that is levied on me, as a passenger, which goes to the government. It is not their money.

But they think they can create a system where it won't be taking money out of their pocket, which they say the excise taxes do. But I don't know where the \$10 billion or so a year is going to come to.

Then, of course, the Office of Management and Budget also in this report found last week that, with mandatory spending by this private corporation, there will be a \$19.848 billion deficit over a 10-year period.

Let me repeat that. Mandatory spending by a private corporation assessing some sort of new fee structure on users of the system, including passengers, and the OMB says that that would increase the Federal deficit by \$19.848 billion.

Of course, the majority is always free to waive the rules and they can ignore that. I mean, the rules have been waived numerous times to create more deficit around here, just by the discussion on the other side that they want to address the deficit whenever we eliminate taxes, waive the rules, and pretend that actually eliminating taxes will raise money or it is budget-neutral.

I guess, in this case, they could waive the rules and say the mandatory spending by the private corporation that will lead to additional deficit doesn't matter and it doesn't exist.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for pointing out the potential for a prolonged period to get to NextGen.

We forget it has been a prolonged period. For over 20 years, we have been trying to get NextGen in the current system, and we haven't been able to get it.

It is the GAO, it is the Inspector General of the Transportation Department, and it is numerous reports that have said there is no end in sight as to when we can get NextGen, a GPS-based system.

Let me just point out—the gentleman mentioned Canada, which is a model we are looking at very closely. We certainly have made it to be an American model. But what has Canada done?

Canada, in this type of system, a not-for-profit corporation—which this corporation will not be able to raise taxes,

will not be able to put taxes. It will go to a user fee-based system.

What has Canada done? They have decreased the cost of those user fees by 30 percent over the last 20 years, a 30 percent decrease.

What they are doing this year is that the Canadian Nav Can will launch its first batch of satellites, and over the next 13, 14 months, until the next year of 2017, they will launch 70-plus satellites. They will have visibility of 100 percent of the world's global airspace.

Today all of us together see about 30 percent. The Canadians will do this based on a system that we are trying to move toward to implement. So it has been a great success for Canada. It has lower costs. They are going to have a system that is deployed. It is safe.

The only good news about Canada doing it is that they are one of our best allies. It is not the Russians and the Chinese doing it. If they were doing it, we would be hell-bent on trying to get this done.

Let me just point back to, this is a system that the stakeholders will be in charge of at the board level. The FAA will still be the regulatory agency.

So, again, this is something that is a long time coming. The Clinton administration tried to do it. The Bush administration tried to do it.

The time has come. We should do this. We should not let the Canadians have the ability that we don't have, even though they are our allies.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We have been down this path somewhat exhaustively, except we haven't held exhaustive hearings to bring in the stakeholders, poke at this idea, see if there are alternatives and other ways to make the FAA into a more efficient agency.

Actually, the Canadians are not launching a satellite. They are putting a module on a satellite, and they are allowing people to actually license in or lease in with them, which the FAA could do.

That is not the critical part of the infrastructure we need here in the U.S. That satellite-based system will not be able to improve the ground-based system that we have here in terms of our very, very busy airports. We land more planes in a day at LaGuardia than Canada lands in—I don't know how many days.

So the issue of our system and more efficiency in our system depends on many things, including one thing which is a glaring omission in both the House and Senate bills: runways, aprons, terminals. Guess what. Both the House bill and the Senate bill stiff the airports.

We haven't allowed them to assess a reasonable increase in the passenger facility charge in many, many, many years. So even if this system becomes more efficient, one way or another, at some point, you can't get more planes into LaGuardia without building an-

other runway. That is not going to happen. So we can't even talk about that.

There are other places where we could improve efficiency with another runway, where you could improve efficiency with more terminal space, more gates, more apron. Yet, the airports are not being allowed to assess a user fee to get there.

I actually was an original advocate for the passenger facility charge many years ago when I saw the unfairness of the previous system.

I live in Springfield, Oregon, across the river from Eugene. Eugene has the airport on their property. They had to build a new airport, and they could only assess the fees in taxes against the people of Eugene. Yet, people from Corvallis, people from Springfield, people from Roseburg, all use that airport.

So I thought it would be only fair to assess a passenger facility charge for those sorts of improvements, which I probably enjoy more than most people, flying more than most people. But we haven't allowed an increase in that, and certainly the costs of construction have not gotten any cheaper.

Many of the airports are bonded out. They don't have the capability of issuing more bonds without more revenue flow, but we seem to be ignoring that.

So if you want to look at the system to increase efficiency as a whole and to help the passenger experience, you have got to look at the system as a whole, and I am afraid we are a little bit short there.

Back to the corporate model, we don't know what the user fees will be, which, again, is why business aviation, general aviation, the Nation's largest airline and the regional airlines, which fly 62 percent of the airplanes every day, are all opposed to this black hole.

□ 1715

Suddenly we are going to have a private corporation that assesses some sort of user fee, which is raising more than \$10 billion a year to pay for itself, and then the gentleman says that safety will remain with the FAA. It will, with no funding.

So it is a crisis that every once in a while, you know, idiots take over, and we shut down the government, and that messes up air traffic control, and then we go into sequestration. But it is okay if they shut down every inspector in the FAA and everything else that goes into safety in the FAA and everything that goes into certification at the FAA because that will all remain with the vestigial agency over in the general fund with no funding source, because the assumption is all of the existing excise taxes are going to be repealed and replaced by new, unknown user fees by the private entity.

So what is that new system and how and where is the money going to come from for safety, for certification and all the other critical functions of the FAA? That is left to the total discretion of Congress, with no funding

source. At least today you can look at that and say: Well, we are paying for 93 percent of it through taxes that are being raised, that are dedicated; all we have got to do is come up with 7 percent. But now it will be: Wow, we have got to come up with 100 percent to fund those inspectors and those certifiers and all those people over there. Wow, this is great; let's bifurcate the agency. Plus the communications problem.

And, by the way, the certifiers will have to certify the new systems that the private corporation is proposing to put in place, so the certifiers are now laid off because of a dumb government shutdown but, hey, they can move ahead over here. Well, no, they can't move ahead. They can't deploy any new systems because they are user fee-based, and these people over here are general fund-based.

So I do not believe this solves the problem. I think it would be better to say, if you want to do this, do it the way President Clinton did propose, which is a government corporation. He did not propose privatization. Virtually the vast majority of the countries in the world have gone with government corporations. If you do that, you don't have some of the bizarre problems that they are trying to work around here with the Constitution, which prohibits giving regulatory authority to a private entity.

Well, they work around that by saying everything the corporation wants to do has to be approved by the Secretary, who, by the way, will have a giant new office of experts to advise him or her on whether or not to approve the new fee structure, whether or not to approve the new routes, whether or not to approve this or that or anything that is regulatory in nature. That all still has to go back to the Secretary, who, by the way, is subject to Congress and the appropriations process and political appointment.

We aren't solving the problem. If this goes forward, you are not solving the problem. I posit that you are creating more.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on our side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SHUSTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I will say, point out for the Record, correct the Record, first, the gentleman is correct: Canada is not launching satellites. They are launching modules to go on satellites by the corporation that they own about half of to deploy this GPS-based system. So, the gentleman is correct. Technically they are not satellites, but they are components to go on satellites which will, in fact, see 100 percent of the global airspace, which America should be doing.

The next thing I would like to correct is we have had numerous hearings

on this. We have had over half a dozen hearings. In fact, we had one just before we marked the bill up. We have had over 12—I think maybe even 14 or 15—roundtable discussions with both sides of the aisle and stakeholders from all over the industries who sat there and talked to us about what they thought is good and what is bad.

The concern about safety—as I said, safety stays in government, and today the FAA safety certification portion of it is paid by the general fund. That is appropriate. The other fees, the taxes, we plan to eliminate most of those taxes, eliminate those taxes and go to a user fee-based system.

There is plenty of money there. That will go to run the ATC system. This way it will be in a user fee-based system, which history has shown us what Canada has done. History has shown us, I think, in many, many cases, when you take something outside the government that can go outside the government, it is run more efficiently. We will get out of the starts and the stops of the appropriations process, of the government shutdowns, of the 23 extensions last time.

This will be a better program. And the Secretary and the FAA will still maintain that regulatory oversight, which, in fact, means that Congress will maintain regulatory oversight. And I don't know when Congress has not had oversight and, in many cases, screwed up many of the private industries in this country by our overreach and our oversight by putting rules and regulations in place that don't work. In the case of the FAA, we rolled those back in many cases, let them go outside the Federal Government human resources rules and regulations. What did they do? They just kept on doing the same old thing.

So this is an opportunity for us, again, with extensive hearings, with extensive experience around the world, looking at people who have done it successfully. Again, I believe the time has come for us to do this, to make this a modern aviation system that I believe will improve safety, although we have an incredibly safe system today.

It will reduce the cost for the traveling public. It will make their flight times faster, more efficient, and it will be good for the environment. I don't see, really, anything in this that many, many Members of this House can't embrace.

I will continue to talk about it and continue to push it because I really believe the time is now to have a modern air traffic control system that will be the envy of the world, just as our aviation system, our airlines, the development of our airlines, and our manufacturers have been for years. If we don't do it, I think we stand to diminish ourselves in the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, we invented aviation. We ought to make sure that we continue to be the leaders in the world when it comes to aviation, whether it is flying planes, building

planes, or controlling the airspace in the most efficient and safe way.

Again, I urge all my colleagues to support this short-term extension that is on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this short-term bill to extend the FAA authorization for three months and tax revenue for one year gives us more time to negotiate bipartisan reforms that are needed. While I will support this extension, I'm concerned that Republicans are using this bill to buy time for privatization.

Let me be clear: we should not privatize the FAA. Privatizing the FAA would put control of our skies in the hands of a private corporation that put profits over passenger safety. It gives that private corporation the power to tax the flying public who have no alternative. It would increase complexity and lead to higher costs for passengers. It would reduce air service to small and rural communities. And it hands a private corporation billions of dollars' worth of taxpayers' property and other assets—free of charge.

Capt. Chesley Sullenberger, the US Airways pilot who landed his disabled aircraft on the Hudson River in 2009, agrees. He told POLITICO: "There ought to be other, better ways to make sure that air traffic control has long-term, consistent funding for capital improvements other than eviscerating access to the air traffic control system for anyone other than airlines."

I think we can all agree that there are improvements that can and should be made to the FAA, and this bill gives us time to work toward them. But we should not cloak those improvements in a bill that gives up Congress's jurisdiction and harms taxpayers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4721.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4596, SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3797, SATISFYING ENERGY NEEDS AND SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT ACT

Mr. STIVERS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-453) on the resolution (H. Res. 640) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

S. 2426, by the yeas and nays;

H. Con. Res. 75, by the yeas and nays;

H. Con. Res. 121, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 0, not voting 52, as follows:

[Roll No. 111]

YEAS—381

Abraham	Amash	Barr
Aderholt	Amodei	Barton
Aguilar	Ashford	Bass
Allen	Barletta	Beatty

Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah

Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowey

Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Bonamici
Conyers
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon

Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart

Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden

Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—52

Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Conyers
Costa
Davis, Danny
Doggett
Duckworth
Duffy
Elmers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Grayson
Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Huffman
Hunter
Israel
Johnson (GA)
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Langevin
Lipinski
Maloney,
Carolyn
McCaul
Noem

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1847

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 111, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

DEFINING CERTAIN ATROCITIES AS WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, “war crimes”, “crimes against humanity”, and “genocide”, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 393, nays 0, not voting 40, as follows:

[Roll No. 112]

YEAS—393

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah

Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah

Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowey

Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond

Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)

Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho

NOT VOTING—40

Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Costa
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grayson

Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Israel
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Lipinski
Maloney,
Carolyn

Noem
Pascarell
Pearce
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Schiff
Sires
Smith (WA)
Wenstrup
Whitfield

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1854

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: “Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.”.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 392, nays 3, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 113]

YEAS—392

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguiar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishak
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)

Clawson (FL)
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr

Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)

Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks

Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schneider

Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—3

Amash
Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Costa
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Graves (MO)
Grayson

NOT VOTING—38

Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Israel
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Lipinski
Noem
Pascarell

Pearce
Peters
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Schiff
Sires
Smith (WA)
Wenstrup
Whitfield

□ 1900

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WE MUST CONFRONT EVIL IN THE WORLD

(Mr. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, there are times in history we are ashamed of, times when people were faced with great evil and the world looked away.

Cambodia's Communist regime massacred its people. Many in the world made excuses for them. Stalin purged Russians and starved the nation of Ukraine. He was praised by a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.

The Jewish people of Europe were systematically murdered by Hitler, but the world was too afraid to see the truth. The scales were only lifted from their eyes when millions were already dead. At the time, people made excuses for their decision to look away. They said the politics were too dicey, or it wouldn't be diplomatic, or sometimes they couldn't believe that such evil exists.

When we look back, those excuses don't make sense. They don't matter. What matters is that people were dying and the world didn't notice. Evil does exist, but ignoring it or refusing to call it by its name does not make it go away.

ISIL is murdering Christians. They are targeting people who share my faith, the faith of many people in this House, people who believe in Jesus Christ. Because of that belief, they are being marked for execution. ISIL is murdering and enslaving religious and ethnic minorities everywhere they gain power, and we know it.

We know what they are doing, and if we don't say it, we should be ashamed. ISIL is committing genocide. They are targeting non-Muslims, Christians, Yazidis, and more, and pushing them to extinction.

But we also can't ignore what else is happening in Syria. The Assad regime and its allies are indiscriminately killing on a breathtaking scale. Torture, rape, chemical weapons, barrel bombs, forced starvation—the Syrian regime is targeting civilians and millions are suffering.

The world cannot look away. The Obama administration cannot dance around the question. Today the House stands firmly to proclaim to the world that genocide is happening, that evil is real, and that it must be stopped. We urge the administration to join us.

We must look evil in the face and confront it, because if we do not wake up, more innocent blood will be shed.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL PI DAY

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join mathematicians, math lovers, and millions around the world in celebrating International Pi Day. Observed every year on March 14, beginning at 1:59 p.m., Pi Day recognizes the mathematical constant known as pi. It also coincides with the birthday of one of science's greatest minds and former resident of my district, Albert Einstein.

While many will celebrate today by indulging in a tastier type of pie, today offers a much more serious reminder of the importance of technology, engineering, and math, fields that help strengthen our Nation's economy and security. Studies have shown little improvement in math and science test scores in the United States since 1995.

And so as we honor the concept of pi and the legacy of Einstein, I ask my colleagues to join me in renewing our commitment to outstanding STEM education in our schools and support of STEM at the Federal level.

CONGRATULATING WAYZATA HOCKEY TEAM

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, Indiana has its basketball, Texas has its football, but in Minnesota it doesn't get much better than the annual high school hockey tournament.

I would like to congratulate the Wayzata High School boys hockey team for taking home the title with a tough 5-3 victory for the championship over Eden Prairie. The Trojans, under Coach Pat O'Leary, fought back from a 3-1 deficit to claim their first ever State hockey title.

The State hockey tournament is always a tremendous event, with fans from around Minnesota descending on St. Paul to fill up the Xcel Energy Center to cheer on their teams.

The players at Wayzata should be very proud of their accomplishments on and off the ice. I want to recognize their commitment not just to their sport, but to spending time in the classroom and in the community to become outstanding student athletes.

Mr. Speaker, the family, friends, and fans are very proud of the Wayzata High School hockey team. We offer them congratulations.

THE CHILDREN ARE LISTENING

(Mr. GARAMENDI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, my daughter is a kindergarten teacher, and the children are listening.

They are listening to our national debate. They are listening to the television. They are coming to class, and they are repeating. They are repeating the bullying that they hear on television, and they take it to the classroom.

The children are listening. It is time for civility in our Presidential discourse.

IRAN SCOFFS AT AGREEMENTS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Iran once again has blatantly scoffed at the West by breaking its agreements.

Just this last week, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps test-fired several ballistic missiles. The missiles were reportedly designed to hit our ally Israel and were inscribed in Hebrew, "Israel must be wiped out."

Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, Iran is forbidden from undertaking any work on missiles designed to deliver nuclear weapons. But the Iranians will do what suits them. The West—specifically, the United States—probably will do nothing about this test. The Ayatollah conveniently breaks international agreements.

Under the same U.N. agreement, the Ayatollah is prohibited from buying conventional arms for the next 5 years, but the Ayatollah broke his word again. The U.N. agreement has not stopped Iran from negotiating an arms sale with the saber-rattling Russians.

Mr. Speaker, the ink is barely dry on the so-called deal that the Obama administration made with Iran. Iran is a rogue nation determined to destroy the United States and Israel. Meanwhile, the United States sits blissfully by and just wrings its hands.

Iran must be stopped. Sanctions must be enforced, and eventually the citizens of Iran must change their government.

And that is just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING FIRST TWO RECIPIENTS OF CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to congratulate Congressmen SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS for being named the first two recipients of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Congressional Patriot Award.

This prestigious award was established to biennially honor two Members of Congress who have placed the interests and the goals of nation above all other concerns.

As a former U.S. Air Force pilot, SAM JOHNSON truly understands what it means to serve one's country. He flew combat missions in both the Korean

and the Vietnam wars, and he spent nearly 7 years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi after he was shot down over Vietnam. I commend SAM JOHNSON for his tireless work to support America's men and women in uniform as well as for his efforts on behalf of all veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I also have much praise for another wonderful colleague, JOHN LEWIS. JOHN's record of fighting for civil rights and civil liberties dates back to the 1960s, when he was named chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and served as the youngest keynote speaker alongside Dr. Martin Luther King at the March on Washington in 1963.

Congressmen SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS have both lived lives of distinction, and I expect that tomorrow night's inaugural ceremony at the Library of Congress will be a great testament to their life of service.

PREVENTING CRIMES AGAINST VETERANS ACT

(Mr. ROONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of our Nation's veterans, who have been targeted by criminals seeking to defraud them.

Last year, veterans in my district brought to my attention that these individuals are advertising themselves to the veterans community, claiming that, for a fee, they can speed up their claims with the VA.

Now, everybody knows that the claims process at the VA is far too slow, but these people are deliberately seeking out veterans, purporting to speed up this process with their VA claims, which they cannot do, then illegally charging them exorbitant fees and then disappearing.

I introduced a bill with my fellow Floridian and neighbor, Democrat TED DEUTCH, titled the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act, to penalize these fraudsters who are blatantly engaging in a scheme to defraud our veterans.

Yes, that is true, these people prey on American veterans. So it is our duty to ensure that our heroes are protected under every aspect of the law. I am confident that this bill can pass the House with bipartisan support.

□ 1915

SENSIBLE WATER STORAGE

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am heartened to see over the weekend in a Sacramento Bee article that California Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN has also called for pumping excess water that flows through the delta, despite opinions on endangered fish numbers.

We have been talking a long time about taking that excess water and

putting it aside in storage instead of just letting it run out to the ocean. I am a little frustrated we didn't get to that point earlier.

Back in December, we had a press conference and put forth legislation to acknowledge that we are losing water that could be put aside in other storage facilities for anybody to be able to use.

We are looking forward to working with Senator FEINSTEIN on this and bringing forward sensible water storage with water we already have in these high-flow times.

REMEMBERING TIFFANY JOSLYN

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great sadness and overwhelming grief to acknowledge the passing of my beloved staff member, Tiffany Joslyn.

As we return to Washington, I did not want one day to pass without a tribute to her, although I will return again with more details and more expressions of how talented she was.

Tiffany died Saturday, March 5, in a very tragic car accident while traveling between Rhode Island and Massachusetts, having gone home to mourn with her family on the passing of a relative.

The greatest tragedy of all is that not only did Tiffany lose her life, but her beloved only brother died and his wife was injured in the same accident.

I come today to acknowledge her light and to tell her parents of the great respect Tiffany has garnered throughout the Washington community and beyond.

She was a brilliant writer. She served as Deputy Chief Counsel of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations of the House Judiciary Committee.

Republicans and Democrats loved her well. She had the kind of spirit, generosity, and eagerness to get the job done that everyone loved.

Tiffany had a passion to help the most vulnerable and those who were caught up in the criminal justice system unfairly, but also those who deserved restoration and rehabilitation. Together we were on a journey to continue to find a way to reform the criminal justice system.

She made great progress. Two of the bills we worked on have already passed out of the Judiciary Committee, and I am praying that they come to the floor not only in her name, but in the names of all the vulnerable people that would benefit from her great work.

To her family, this tragedy is so enormous that words cannot comfort, but you should know that your daughter and your late son were lights to so many. May good bless them as they rest in peace, for they left a legacy. It will go on and on.

I am ever grateful for the opportunity to work with Tiffany, a young

woman with a big heart and maybe even an old soul. She had a lot to give and a lot of intellect to make a difference in this world.

GENOCIDE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, we are living in a time of great political difficulty. That is not a secret to anyone.

Just moments ago the House of Representatives did something essential. We came together not in a bipartisan fashion, but in a trans-partisan fashion, rising above the petty difficulties that we seemingly cannot ever resolve, and spoke to the heart of something that is essential for all of humanity. We declared together what is happening in the Middle East to Christians, Yazidis, and others to be genocide.

I am extraordinarily proud of this body for speaking clearly, for speaking factually, and for speaking about this grave injustice that is happening to so many ancient faith traditions.

This is a grave injustice, and it is an assault on human dignity. This grave injustice is a threat to civilization itself when one group of persons, namely, ISIS, can systematically target another group of persons because of their faith.

That destroys the very basis for international order, tranquility among people, and for civilization itself. That is why what we did tonight in speaking so clearly and rising above differences in a unanimous fashion is so extraordinary.

I owe an extreme debt of gratitude to my colleague, ANNA ESHOO from California. ANNA has been a stalwart leader in this effort. Her own ethnic background is Chaldean. She has an intimate familiarity with the Middle East and the suffering of this group of people.

ANNA has led Congress on her side of the aisle and my side of the aisle, in partnership with me, to continue to try to confront the scandal of silence, the indifference toward what is happening to these ancient faith traditions that have as much a right to be in their ancestral homeland as anyone else.

In June of 2014, in the Iraqi city of Mosul, there was an eerie silence one morning. For the first time in two millennia, the church bells didn't ring.

Mosul is one of those diverse cities in the Middle East. It had a rich tapestry, a vibrancy of various faith traditions: Christians, Yazidis, Muslims.

There were differences of religious perspectives, sometimes tension, but they found a way to continue to contribute an interdependency toward the well-being of that community.

They were invaded by eighth century barbarians with 21st century weaponry:

ISIS. The Christians who were there were told to leave, convert, or die by the sword.

Many fled with just what was on their back. The remaining Christians in the homes had this painted on their door. This is the Arabic symbol for the letter N.

It stands for Nazarene, which is a derogatory term used by some in the Middle East to describe the Christians. This was painted on their door as a sign that it was time for them to go or they would die, except it wasn't painted in nice gold like this. It was painted blood red.

We have so many tragedies and difficulties facing humanity, we can sometimes become numb to the violence that is happening in so many places in the world because it is overwhelming.

But when you have one group of people who has extreme disregard for that sacred space of humanity, for that sacred space of conscience and individual rights that are expressed in religious freedom, you not only have a threat to a group of people far away, but you have a threat to the underpinnings of civilization itself.

I happened to be in the room when Pope Francis was given a small Christian cross, a crucifix. This cross had belonged to a young Syrian man. He had been captured by the jihadists.

He was told: Convert or die. So he chose. He chose his ancient faith tradition. He chose Christ. He was beheaded. His mother was somehow able to recover his body and this cross and bury him. She fled and came to Austria. Through this means, the small cross came into the possession of the Holy Father.

This is not an isolated story. It has happened over and over and over again, as persons who were denied their life or denied the very conditions for life and they had to flee. This is called genocide.

The International Association of Genocide Scholars, the prestigious academic body, has labeled this genocide. Genocide Watch has called this genocide. The Yazidi international community has labeled this a genocide. Pope Francis has said so. Presidential candidates on both sides of the aisle have said so. Now the House of Representatives has declared it so as well.

I live in Lincoln, Nebraska, and I am privileged to represent the largest Yazidi community in America. It is not a community that I have gotten to know just recently because of all the difficulties that they have had. We have worked with them for many, many years.

Many of these Yazidi families were translators for the United States Army during the height of the Iraq war. Because of that, this body, by law, gave them special citizenship options to live here in America, and many settled in Lincoln, Nebraska.

About a year and a half ago, a number of young men in the Yazidi commu-

nity came to see me. They were on the verge of tears.

They spoke passionately, even angrily—and I don't blame them for being angry—Congressman, do something. Our mothers, our sisters, our families, are trapped in Sinjar and ISIS is coming for them. We don't have the capacity to stop them. Help us. You are the only ones who can. Help us. Please, do something. There is no more time.

The Yazidi community also took its case to Washington. Around the same time a resolution that was led by my good friend, Congressman VARGAS, who will speak momentarily, and passed by us in the House of Representatives, which called for international humanitarian assistance in northern Iraq for the besieged people, laid some of the groundwork, which was a very prudent decision—and I commend President Obama for it—to stopping what was certain to be a slaughter on Mount Sinjar, saving the remnants of the Yazidi people who were still there.

So today we, as a body, are calling upon the international community as well as the fullness of our own government to act and to call this genocide.

This is one of those Yazidi translators. His name is Omar. Again, he gained his citizenship because he was so sacrificially helpful to us during the height of the Iraq war. He has lost 36 family members of the Yazidi community to the violence.

He recently went back to the liberated areas of Sinjar and saw the bombed remains of the ancient Christian church here. He took it upon himself—a Yazidi man that does not share the Christian tradition—to put a makeshift cross over the site where the Christians previously lived.

Why is this genocide designation important? It is just to Omar and his family. It is just to the Christians who died or had to flee. It is just to the other people who are under severe persecution. By the way, I should note that the people who have been killed the most by ISIL are innocent Muslims.

The genocide declaration, though, declares that there is a systematic attempt to exterminate this ancient faith tradition of the Christians, Yazidis, and others.

What it means is we are helping set the preconditions, if you will, for when there is, hopefully, a real security settlement in northern Iraq and in Syria and in other places and that the Christians, Yazidis, and others are fully integrated back into their ancient homeland and given fullness of rights as citizens, given fullness of protection and process, full integration into their own governance structures.

□ 1930

By raising this banner tonight, I think we have done something good. It is a word, but it is a powerful word.

In 2004, Colin Powell, then-Secretary of State, came to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and he declared there what was happening in Darfur to

be a genocide. In doing so, it helped put an end to that grim reality.

So today the House has spoken, and I am proud that we have done so in a bipartisan manner, with unanimity. What I hope this does is, again, elevate international consciousness, calling upon the responsible communities of the world to seek out constructive, creative ways to help stop the violence, to help stop the persecution, to push for the right type of security arrangements that will restore what was once the rich tapestry of diversity of perspectives and beliefs in the Middle East.

Without that, I have little hope. But with this, and the return of persons like Omar and others who respect differences, who have true friendships, who are willing to sacrifice for their deep beliefs, these are the nobility of values that the ancient traditions can bring back to their shattered homeland; and that is why it is so important that we acted today.

Mr. Speaker, let me turn to, again, my good friend from California (Ms. ESHOO), who has worked tirelessly on this resolution and wants to share her thoughts as well tonight.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Nebraska, the very distinguished Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank him for his words and for his magnificent remarks here on the floor this evening. We obviously share the same sentiments.

I think if anyone is tuned in this evening for what we call a Special Order, the Congress is not really held in great regard today, but there is on a day-to-day basis for so many of us a discovery of deep friendship that is created, that comes about because we work so closely together on something that binds us, where we have not only common ground, but the deep, deep values of our country that are embedded in us and everyone here, people across the country, and that we get to work on it together.

Congressman FORTENBERRY is my brother, and I thank him. I thank him from the bottom of my heart for the values that he has expressed, the work that he has put into this, and what it means to the people that we are speaking for.

This resolution expresses the sense of the Congress that the atrocities that are being perpetrated by ISIS, they constitute war crimes, and they are genocide against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria and throughout the region.

Now, over the past decade we have really witnessed an acceleration. It started when there was the invasion of Iraq, but it has heightened as the years have gone on. And now the assault on Christians and other religious minorities, particularly by ISIS, has moved to a level of barbarism that we read about in the history books, and is taking place, imagine, in the 21st century.

It has included the torture and the murder of thousands, the displacement

of millions, including Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Armenians, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandaeans, Kaka'e, Amalekites, and the Yazidis that Mr. FORTENBERRY has spoken to and represents so magnificently. These are families that are being torn apart, fathers and sons being executed, mothers and daughters being enslaved and raped.

The USA Today columnist, Kirsten Powers, painted a very vivid picture when she wrote in December of last year:

In October, Islamic State militants in Syria demanded that two Christian women and six men convert to Islam. When they refused, the women were publicly raped, and then beheaded along with the men. On the same day, militants cut off the fingertips of a 12-year old boy in an attempt to force his Christian father to convert. When his father refused, they were brutalized and they were both crucified.

Today, there are fewer than 500 Christians remaining in Iraq, down from as many as 1.5 million in 2003.

Now, the United Nations has written, come up with a definition some time ago of what genocide actually is:

Any of the following acts committed with an intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

This is genocide, and this is what is actually taking place today. Despite the persecution of these hundreds of thousands of religious minorities, the United States has not spoken out; but tonight the United States House of Representatives has. And this is a seminal moment for the House to have taken this on and to express unanimously that this is genocide.

There are many things that we have worked on together, as members of, and other members as well, of the House Religious Minority Caucus; humanitarian aid, protection, faster refugee processing for these vulnerable communities, and an official statement by the Congress. Tonight that happened. We have labeled these atrocities for what they are, genocide.

I think that Congressman FORTENBERRY has stated in a most eloquent way why this is important.

First of all, this is one of the great values of our country, one of the great, great values of our country, where we recognize religions of people of all religious backgrounds.

Our Constitution, in just a few words, in just a few words, I believe, has prevented bloodshed, whereas in other places, it takes place.

It is as deeply meaningful to me as a first-generation American, the only Member of the entire Congress that is of Assyrian and Armenian descent. This is a repeat of history of my family. It is why I am a first-generation

American, because my grandparents fled, both sides of my family, the Armenian side and the Assyrian side, for this very reason, because they were being hunted down and persecuted because they were Christians.

We know that a century ago the world witnessed—but the House and the Congress is still silent on this, and we have to address that, too—when the Ottoman Empire rounded up and murdered Armenians, Greeks, and other minorities in Constantinople. By 1923, there were some 1.5 million women, children, and men who were lost. It was a systematic campaign that we now know as and call the Armenian Genocide.

So for those in my family who told the stories, my grandparents, my parents, this is, for me, a bittersweet evening. But I think that they are all proud, those who have been called to God, and those who are still with us, that the United States House of Representatives is calling this out for what it is.

It matters when the United States speaks. Our voices collectively, this evening, are going to echo around the world; and the stability, as Congressman FORTENBERRY spoke to, of these minority communities, have really been the glue that have held these ancient communities together for so long.

I, too, share the hope and pray for the day that there will be peace in the region and that they will be recognized and honored in their communities, on the lands, these ancient lands, with their ancient faiths. I think that is the collective hope of all of us. The stability and, I think, the cultural identity of the Middle East depends on this.

The United States has always championed human rights, basic human rights, and civil and religious liberties, both at home and abroad. Whenever we go abroad, those are the issues that we raise with whomever we are meeting with. I think that these are our most cherished values and, I think, America's greatest export.

During his trip to South America in July of 2015, Pope Francis called for an end to this genocide of Christians in the Middle East, saying, "In this third world war which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide is taking place, and it must end."

I think his voice spoke, obviously, for the voiceless.

Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, the Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Church of Chicago, recently wrote in the Wall Street Journal the following:

"It may seem like we in the United States have little ability to change conditions in the Middle East and elsewhere. But that outlook has too often led to inaction and great regret after crimes against humanity have been allowed to unfold without intervention. The United States and other members of the U.N. made a solemn vow in 2005 with the passage of the Responsibility to Protect, a response to crimes against humanity. With genocide oc-

curring before our very eyes, we must properly identify the crimes and honor our international commitment under the Responsibility to Protect."

So, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, with the words of Pope Francis, Bishop Demetrios, countless advocates across our country and around the world, and the 203 bipartisan cosponsors of this resolution, and the voice of the entire House, unanimous vote this evening of this resolution, I am very proud.

I am very proud and I am lastingly grateful to be a part of this body that has spoken as one on this issue of enormous import and morality because we, tonight, have let it be known to the world that this is, in fact, the horror of genocide that is taking place in the Middle East.

Again, it is a moment of great pride to me, certainly to my family and to people, not only my own people, but to those across the United States, the religious leaders of all faiths that have spoken out.

This tonight, the evening of March 14, 2016, will live on and historians will record that we indeed did the right thing.

So I thank you all.

□ 1945

Historians will record that we indeed did the right thing. So I thank you all.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentlewoman for your impactful, important, heartfelt, and beautiful words of sympathy and compassion, but also for your action.

What you said, particularly regarding not only respecting the ancient faith traditions, but honoring them in their native lands, ought to be what we are all striving for. So I thank you for your beautiful statements.

Now I would like to turn to my friend and colleague, Congressman TRENT FRANKS, a Congressman from Arizona who, again, has been a stalwart leader on all types of assaults to human dignity as they manifest themselves in so many difficult ways across the spectrum of life. So I am grateful for your friendship and for your leadership as well.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY especially for his leadership and courage on this issue. I thank Congresswoman ESHOO not only for her personal courage, but just for the perspective that she brings to this House given her ancestors and the family history that she has with some of the challenges that are so parallel to what we are talking about tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the United States of America has been the greatest national force for good the world has ever known. Our Nation has made sacrifices to the extreme to extinguish some of the worst evils that have plagued humanity across the decades. I am honored to stand here with my colleagues who have led this fight to call the Islamic States' insidious campaign

of terror against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities what it is: genocide.

For months, noble organizations like the Knights of Columbus and countless valiant individuals have worked tirelessly to document evidence of genocide against ancient faith communities in Iraq and Syria. Hundreds of pages containing accounts of massacres, unimaginable brutality, and uncovered mass graves have been delivered to world leaders, including the Obama administration, in an effort to condemn ISIS violence as the genocide that it most certainly is.

Recognition of genocide with the passage of H. Con. Res. 75 is due in large part to the conviction and commitment of these organizations and individuals—and for that humanity owes them great and profound gratitude. Yet today, despite all of the overwhelming evidence, this administration remains stunningly silent.

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor and anti-Nazi dissident, who said: “Silence in the face of evil is evil itself: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.”

Mr. Speaker, we are now witness to some of the most glaring and brutal attacks against the universal human right of religious freedom in history. ISIS has been the very face of evil. We have seen hundreds of thousands of civilians flee the land of their spiritual heritage. We have seen mass executions and beheadings. We have seen the destruction of ancient places of worship and sacred sites. We have seen women and children assaulted and sold as commodities in a modern-day slave market—sometimes little girls for as little as 50 cents.

We have seen the Islamic State desecrate, violate, humiliate, and strip innocent men, women, and children of their God-given human dignity. And why? Because there is no place for Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities in the Islamic State's self-proclaimed caliphate. The message of this metastasizing cancer is clear: those who do not conform to their abhorrent ideology will be destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has been fully aware that Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities have been subjected to the most extreme kind of brutality and barbaric attacks. The Islamic State has publicly declared their intent to annihilate those who do not submit to their caliphate, stating, “it will continue to wage war against the apostates until they repent from apostasy. It will continue to wage war against the pagans until they accept Islam.” Mr. Speaker, justice demands that this be condemned as genocide.

Today, the cries of the innocent should compel us to act. Refusal to acknowledge and specifically name Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities in a designation of genocide

would be one of the more disgraceful chapters in the Obama administration's shameful and abhorrent response to the insidious evil of the Islamic State.

The conspicuous silence of this administration and its failure to act decisively not only has the gravest of implications for thousands of innocent fellow human beings, but it also sends a message to the world that the United States of America, which has long served as an impetus for freedom and justice, has either lost the moral conviction to defend the lives of the innocent or the political will to crush the evil that desecrates them.

Not to speak is to speak, Mr. Speaker. Not to act is to act, Mr. Speaker. And the world is watching what we will—or, shamefully, will not—say or do.

Mr. Speaker, I would adjure the President of the United States and Secretary Kerry not to callously continue to stand by in silence and let this evil relentlessly proceed.

With that, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank my friend, Congressman FRANKS of Arizona, for his powerful statement. Not to speak is to speak. Of all people in the body, I think that is a marked tribute to the Congressman who has worked tirelessly and spoken out on behalf of the protection of innocent persons.

Now I want to turn to my good friend, Congressman JUAN VARGAS from California, who as well has helped in an extraordinary way to further not only this cause, but, again, trying to elevate the nobility of the ideal that we should all be united in mind, heart, and spirit if we are going to be persons who respect the rules of law, the standards for international order, or, more basically, our need for one another.

I am so grateful for your willingness to speak out on a whole host of issues, and thank you for coming tonight, Congressman VARGAS.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you, very much, Congressman FORTENBERRY, and also ANNA ESHOO for your courage to come forward and for your words today and for your powerful words that you gave a moment ago to call genocide what it is: genocide, what we are seeing with Christians in particular, Yazidis, and others. So, again, thank you very much for allowing me to speak today.

I would also like to congratulate both of you on the passage of H. Con. Res. 75, which expresses the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIS against religious and ethnic minorities are indeed, as I said, genocide, crimes against humanity. I sincerely hope that the Obama administration will see the bipartisan show of support for this timely resolution as an impetus to clearly and forthrightly declare these acts genocide, because that is what they are. So I am hoping that they take action.

Around the world, political and religious leaders have spoken out to con-

demn ISIS' acts of raping, kidnapping, torturing, and killing of Christians, Yazidis, Shias, Turks, and other religious minorities.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the European Parliament, the Kurdistan Regional Government, and His Holiness, Pope Francis have called these actions by their proper name: genocide—genocide.

I would like to echo the words of Pope Francis, who eloquently stated: “Our brothers are being persecuted, chased away, they are forced to leave their homes without being able to take anything with them. I assure these families that I am close to them and in constant prayer. I know how much you are suffering; I know that you are being stripped of everything.”

It has almost been 2 years since the fall of Mosul, when ISIS warned religious minorities living under its jurisdiction to either convert to Islam, pay a cumbersome religious tax, or be executed. I won't go through all the atrocious acts that they have committed. I think that they were spoken of already here in a very dramatic way. Again, they did what they said they were going to do; and that is ISIS said that, if you didn't leave, if you didn't convert, you would be executed. That is, in fact, what they have done in the most horrific way.

We have to act. It is time for us to act. I believe that this mass exodus represents the largest forced displacement in the Middle East since the Armenian genocide in Turkey 100 years ago.

A genocide, known as the crime of crimes, has both legal and moral implications under both Federal and international law. This means that if a genocide is declared, it will demand American leadership and resources to prevent and punish the ongoing assault of Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities that are targeted for extinction.

While I applaud the various actions and commitments the Obama administration has made to alleviate the suffering of thousands of victims of ISIS, I strongly and firmly believe we can, we should, and we must do more.

History is full of examples of leaders who opposed these mass atrocities in abstraction but similarly opposed any action in the moment. I call on President Obama and Secretary Kerry to take the first step in firmly calling this egregious situation a genocide. It is past time to speak the truth to power and not to mince any words, and we shouldn't mince any words.

Lastly, I would say this. This has been a bipartisan effort. I did have the opportunity to travel to Erbil with Congress Members DARRELL ISSA and JOHN MICA. We were able to talk to victims there of this horrific genocide, and we were able to talk to the Kurds who were, in fact, helping dramatically, many of them losing their own lives because they wanted to protect Christians and Yazidis.

We have to do more. Unfortunately, we probably won't get much information. Maybe if I went over and punched my good friend JEFF—out of love, of course, brother—maybe we could get some attention to this matter. But we have to shout out, and we have to get the attention of the administration. We have to do something. We have to do something because this is genocide, and we just can't sit idly by.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I want to thank my good friend, Congressman VARGAS, for your impactful words. If it does take your coming over here to punch me, come on, let's go, because that is worth it.

I want to also reiterate something I mentioned earlier. It was your resolution that called for an international humanitarian intervention that I feel created the environment, the condition, which was empowering to the Obama administration to intervene on behalf of the Yazidis trapped on Mount Sinjar. That is an overlooked fact and consideration around here. But I am glad to say it, and I want to thank you for calling as well, urging the administration to act in this regard. You have the moral authority to do so.

I know Secretary Kerry has sympathies in this regard, but just like the Yazidis when they were trapped on the mountain, to wait in the face of clear facts is to potentially not only lose time, but to lose lives and lose the option for, again, setting the preconditions for reintegration of these ancient faith traditions back into their ancestral homelands. So I thank you for your good words.

Now I want to turn to my good friend Congressman SEAN DUFFY from Wisconsin, an outspoken man of the House who has not been afraid to confront, as well, the various problems facing humanity and the assaults on human dignity as they have manifested themselves and fractured our society and so many others in so many ways. So I thank you, Congressman DUFFY.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's yielding, and I am grateful for all of your work, Congressman FORTENBERRY, Congressman VARGAS, and Congresswoman ESHOO.

Sometimes people look at this House and think that all we do is fight and disagree. I am not going to talk about you two punching each other to get a little more press, but it is a remarkable night when we all come together and stand together on such an important issue as this, where we all lend our voices to an incredibly important cause.

We spent a lot of time tonight talking about the atrocities, and I am going to join in because we can't say enough all that has happened.

Two million Christians called Iraq home prior to 2013. Fewer than 300,000 reside there today. Many were victims of killing or kidnappings, others forced to leave their homes by radicals, al Qaeda or ISIS.

In Syria, Christians accounted for 10 percent of the population, but today

their numbers have declined to less than 1 million. Last summer, ISIS kidnapped nearly 300 Christians in a Syrian village and then later ransomed them back to their families for an average of \$100,000 per person.

When ISIS invaded Mosul, Iraq, in 2013, as Mr. FORTENBERRY mentioned, they tagged Christian homes with an N for Nazarene, and then they gave the occupants a choice: you can convert, you can flee, or you would face death. In July of 2014, ISIS announced that the city, no doubt, was Christian-free—no surprise.

In 2014, August, a woman from Bartella, Iraq, recounted the night that ISIS came into her village and then into her home and accused her of putting gold coins in her 11-month-old baby's diaper. So they took her baby, threw her baby on the couch, beat her baby, and threw her up against the wall. Eventually, they let her leave, but they kept her husband and made him convert.

In February of 2015, ISIS slaughtered 21 Coptic Christians on a Libyan beach, pointing them towards Rome, and proclaimed this message: "Signed with blood to the nation of the cross."

In March of 2016, this month, four nuns, members of the Missionaries of Charity, founded by the late Mother Teresa of Calcutta, were executed by gunmen in Yemen.

□ 2000

Their crime? They were caring for the elderly and the disabled. Pope Francis called them today's martyrs.

Just yesterday gunmen stormed three hotels on the Ivory Coast. Among the 18 people who were killed was a 5-year-old boy—a 5-year-old boy—who was shot in the head. But eyewitnesses report that the friend who was with him was spared his life because he was able to recite a Muslim prayer.

Mr. Speaker, these are hardly isolated incidents. As we have talked about tonight, this is genocide. The Knights of Columbus submitted a 280-page report chronicling the persecution of Christians by the Islamic State to the State Department this week.

The leader of ISIS recently released a video that made very clear their intent to destroy Christians throughout whatever means possible. He said:

The co-existence of Christians and Jews is impossible, according to the Koran.

I don't think we have to scratch our heads and ask ourselves what is happening in Iraq and Syria. Pope Francis recently condemned the wholesale slaughter of Christians by ISIS, saying that entire Christian families and villages are being completely exterminated.

I look at this House tonight and I am proud that we have so many men and women who are willing to stand up and lend their voice to this great cause.

We have a reputation in America as being a beacon of light, men and women who stand up for freedom, better known as freedom fighters, freedom of life, freedom of religion.

When there are atrocities in the world, we stand up and lend a voice to those who are being persecuted, those who are downtrodden.

I am disappointed that the President has been unwilling to join this House and call the atrocities in Syria and Iraq a genocide. The first step to making sure this ends is that we speak the truth about what is actually happening.

Hopefully, if the President is watching tonight, he will see that we have both Republicans and Democrats who agree on this very important issue. Hopefully, he will join us and take that first step to shedding light on what is happening in Iraq and Syria.

Mr. FORTENBERRY, I commend you for your good efforts on this very important issue. I am proud to stand with you and the rest of this Chamber to make sure those who might not know that people care about them as they are going through pain and anguish—we hear about the sex slaves, young little girls who are held captive, little Christian and Yazidi girls—that they know that people hear them, people care about them, and people are doing here in America all we can to help them out of this crisis. Thank you for your work.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you for your powerful words, Congressman DUFFY. The report that you mentioned is right here. Again, it is a 280-page report submitted to the State Department just recently.

The cover shows that moment where these Coptic Christians from Egypt, who are guilty only of the crime of going to Libya to try to work and earn enough money to sustain their families, were captured by ISIS and then beheaded.

This report lays out the facts. It is not the opinion of the House of Representatives. It is not my opinion or yours. The fact is that this is a genocide.

I am grateful not only to the Knights of Columbus and the organization called In Defense of Christians for producing this, but it basically is a thorough documentation of what has happened that adds further credibility to what we already know and so many people around the world have called genocide.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), my good friend.

Thank you for being here tonight.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank you, Mr. FORTENBERRY, for bringing us together to talk about a most serious topic, one that goes to our heart and makes us so sad for what is happening to these remarkable people who stand up for their faith.

Mr. Speaker, just today the Associated Press reported that President Obama would likely miss the March 17 deadline established by Congress for his administration to determine whether or not ISIS has committed genocide.

This is unfathomable. How long does it take for this President to call a spade a spade and declare what Americans already know to be true?

This isn't hard. ISIS is evil. They have engaged in systematic persecution and mass killing of Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities throughout the Middle East.

The United States has a moral responsibility to lead in the fight against ISIS, but we can't defeat a threat that we refuse to acknowledge exists.

I am proud to participate in tonight's Special Order and to support Congressman FORTENBERRY's resolution because we need to go on RECORD and declare the belief of crisis that ISIS has without a doubt committed genocide and must be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, we in the United States cannot turn a blind eye when our brothers and sisters around the world are murdered, tortured, and kidnapped for their faith.

It is long past time to dispense with this hyper-political correctness and to call these heinous acts by their true name. These are crimes against humanity. Stopping the violence starts with acknowledging this truth.

I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY for his leadership on this much-needed resolution.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Congresswoman BLACK, for your leadership not only on this issue, but so many others.

We often are in very important economic debates, debates about finances and debates about roads. Not often enough, perhaps, do we go to the core of the reason for which exists a country and its laws, namely, to protect human dignity. I want to thank you for your leadership in this regard. Thank you so much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), my good friend, for his good words.

Let me again thank you for your leadership. Your consistency and the continuity in which you apply your principles is very noble and uplifting to me.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I want to thank my friend, Congressman FORTENBERRY, for the steadfast witness that you have given to this cause and other causes of human dignity and to call us together again after this historic House vote today where the House stands in solidarity with the suffering victims of the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to condemn in no uncertain terms the slaughter of Middle Eastern Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq, Syria, and the region held by ISIS.

These are crimes against humanity and acts of genocide. Everyone should denounce this senseless brutality. The United States and the United Nations should officially recognize the mass murder of Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East as acts of genocide.

We do not hear about this massacre often enough from the media. While

many Americans may never have met someone from the Middle East, we are all part of the same human family. Christians in America may be set apart from our brothers and sisters in the Middle East geographically, but we worship the same God and are connected in our humanity.

We owe these suffering men, women, and children the greatest reverence and gratitude for their fortitude as they endure killings, displacement from their homes, forced migration, sexual exploitation, destruction of their property, and endure bodily and mental harm.

We must not remain silent as we live in the comfort of a Nation where our liberties are protected by the law and our culture, to a much greater degree, permits us to peacefully live out our faith.

I recall the words from 2001 of Pope John Paul II, Bishop of Rome, and His Holiness Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch of all Armenians, as they commemorated the sacrifices of the Armenian Christians who were also brutalized by genocide for their faith:

Endowed with great faith, they chose to bear witness to the truth and accept death when necessary in order to share eternal life.

The most valuable treasure that one generation could bequeath to the next was fidelity to the gospel so that the young would become as resolute to their ancestors in bearing witness to the truth.

The extermination of a million and a half Armenian Christians in what is generally referred to as the first genocide of the 20th century and the subsequent annihilation of thousands under the former totalitarian regime are tragedies that still live in the memory of the present-day generation.

Fifteen years later their words still ring true as entire communities of Christians and other religious minorities are ravaged by genocide and religious persecution in the Middle East.

This persecution at the hands of ISIS is so horrific that, as Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill said last month in a joint statement:

Whole families, villages, and cities of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being completely exterminated.

It is intolerable to remain silent and turn a blind eye. Silence and the failure to accurately identify not some, but all, of the victims of this genocide condemns these innocent people to a future of continued brutality, destruction, isolation, and genocide.

All religious minorities in the Middle East deserve religious freedom and the ability to live peacefully within their communities, as they have done for centuries. We will continue to stand in solidarity with them and to denounce the war crimes and genocide being committed against the law.

I want to end with two words, Mr. Speaker, two words: moral clarity. This is the time, Mr. Speaker, for moral clarity. Today this House spoke. The whole world now watches. We need the administration to speak.

I thank my friend.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Congressman ROTHFUS, for your power-

ful words, and thank you for reminding us that this is about the essence of what it means to be human, to stand in solidarity with people far, far away who we may never know, but whose fate and our fate should be intertwined because of our mutual concern not only for one another from the heart, but also for the structures that give rise to essential principles, such as religious liberty. Thank you for your good words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), my good friend.

Thank you for your tireless efforts as well on this resolution. Behind the scenes you have worked very aggressively in this regard.

While it has been stated clearly that ANNA ESHOO and I led this, nonetheless, your work in compelling Members to be involved in this question and raising consciousness has been invaluable. Thank you so much.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his very important work on this vital issue of religious freedom.

I know how closely you worked with my predecessor, Congressman Frank Wolf, who continues this fight for religious freedom now in his retirement from Congress, but his very active work that continues on this important issue.

I rise to recognize the ongoing struggle for human and religious rights in the Middle East and call on the administration to make a genocide designation for the war crimes committed by ISIS against the Christians and other religious and ethnic groups.

We had the resolution that we passed tonight, and I thank all of my colleagues for that unanimous vote that really should speak to the entire country, but also to the entire world, to everybody who is asking: When is there going to be help? When are people going to hear our cries of anguish?

This resolution had over 200 cosponsors, which I was proud to join the gentleman and so many of my colleagues here tonight and express the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians, Yazidis, Kurds, and other religious minorities in the region and those who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons are committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

ISIS has beheaded young children, raped young girls, and systematically slaughtered people just because of the religion they practice.

This is 2016. I remember as a young girl in Catholic school when we would study the martyrs and you would think about those ancient times and how the first Christians had to suffer and be martyred like that.

And then we see four nuns, Sisters of Charity, just trying to help the aged, the infirm, and they are slaughtered in the name of their faith.

We need to have more people hearing about this and focusing on this. At this

time when we have so many side shows that we see the press covering every single day, this is something that they need to be dedicating their time and their resources to and to be using this mass media that we have in so many different mediums to get this word out and understand these atrocities that are going on.

I commend Time magazine for featuring a young Yazidi woman. I believe it was last December. She was named Nadia. Her firsthand account was chilling, a 21-year-old girl. She testified what these monsters had done to her and her family.

When she tried to escape and was recaptured, she recounted her story by saying: “That night, he beat me up”—this was the person who was keeping her in slavery—“forced me to undress and put me in a room with six militants. They continued to commit crimes to my body until I became unconscious.”

□ 2015

She spoke of her niece, who had also been kidnapped, who had witnessed a woman who was cutting her own wrists, trying to kill herself. They heard stories of women who jumped from bridges. In one house in Mosul, where Nadia was kept, an upstairs room was smeared with evidence of suffering. “‘There was blood, and there were fingerprints of hands with the blood on the walls,’ she says. Two women had killed themselves there” so they wouldn’t have to suffer anymore.

“Nadia never considered ending her own life, but she said she wished the militants would do it for her. ‘I did not want to kill myself’”—of course, her faith wouldn’t allow it—“but I wanted them to kill me” so she wouldn’t end up suffering.

Now she is out there telling the world about this, and we need to listen. The European Parliament, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Iraqi and Kurdish Governments all have labeled these actions as genocide. Now we in the House are on record also.

These terrorist organizations are not only persecuting Christians, but Jews, Yazidis, and so many others, as so many of my colleagues have discussed tonight, they also have killed thousands upon thousands of Muslims who refuse to pledge allegiance to their tormentors’ extremist views.

Last week, the organization of the Knights of Columbus in Defense of Christians released a detailed, 278-page report, as Mr. FORTENBERRY, my colleague, has outlined.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the executive summary from the report that details the actions that constitute genocide. I certainly would recommend, like the gentleman did, that people look at this detailed report, and I would ask that the press cover this.

A REPORT SUBMITTED TO SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY BY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS AND IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ISIS is committing genocide—the “crime of crimes”—against Christians and other religious groups in Syria, Iraq and Libya. It is time for the United States to join the rest of the world by naming it and by taking action against it as required by law.

ISIS’ activities are well known. Killings, rapes, torture, kidnappings, bombings and the destruction of religious property and monuments are, in some instances, a matter of public record. The European Parliament, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and the Iraqi and Kurdish governments have labeled ISIS’ actions genocide. Political leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights—have done likewise.

Indeed, Secretary of State John Kerry in August 2014 stated: “ISIS’s campaign of terror against the innocent, including Yazidi (sic) and Christian minorities, and its grotesque and targeted acts of violence bear all the warning signs and hallmarks of genocide.” Pope Francis and Cyril, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, have decried the genocide in these countries against Christians and other religious groups. Most movingly, archbishops and patriarchs of ancient Christian communities in Syria and Iraq have spoken out clearly against this crime and cried over the blood of their people and ISIS’ efforts to rid their homelands forever of the Christian faithful.

None of these declarations of genocide excluded Christians, who, with the other religious minorities in the region, have endured targeted attacks at the hands of this radical group and its affiliates because of their religious beliefs.

On February 4, the Knights of Columbus co-authored a letter to Secretary Kerry requesting a meeting to brief him on evidence that established that the situation confronting Christians and other religious minorities constitutes genocide. While there has never been an official response to that letter, we were contacted by senior State Department officials who requested our assistance in making the case that Christians are victims of genocide at the hands of ISIS. Given the specificity of the information requested, our focus in this report is on the situation confronting Christians in areas that are or have been under ISIS control, primarily in Iraq, Syria and Libya.

ISIS has also targeted Yazidis and other religious minority groups in a manner consistent with genocide. Thus, our contention is not that Christians should be designated as the sole group facing genocide, but rather, that given the overwhelming evidence and the international consensus on this issue, that the United States government should not exclude Christians from such a finding. Doing so would be contrary to fact. The evidence we are presenting to the State Department has three major components:

1. An executive summary
2. A legal brief detailing the case for genocide against Christians
3. Substantial addenda, including original source material, reports, from NGOs documenting the situation, evidence provided to the European Parliament during their consideration of this issue, lists of atrocities, and similar data

A genocide determination requires two specific aspects: intent on the part of those committing genocide and genocidal acts. Both are addressed at length in the attached brief.

Genocide is a crime defined by federal statute and international law. We are asking that Christians be included in finding of genocide and that a recommendation be made for investigation and, in proper cases, for indictment of those responsible. This is required when there is probable cause to believe an offense has been committed by the accused parties. Probable cause is a low standard. When there is probable cause, the duties of the President and the Secretary of State under 22 U.S.C. §8213 and the Genocide Convention Implementation Act of 1987, 18 U.S.C. §§1091-93 require the collection of information “regarding incidents that may constitute . . . genocide,” 22 U.S.C. §8213, and then the President “shall consider what actions can be taken to ensure that [those] who are responsible for . . . genocide . . . are brought to account for such crimes in an appropriately constituted tribunal.” 28 U.S.C. §8213(b).

As in any indictment, a finding of probable cause would allow the State Department to report to Congress that it believes genocide has occurred and to recommend that this be proven conclusively through a court process.

It should also be noted that a finding of genocide does not require the killing of an entire group. The words of the U.N. Convention on Genocide and the U.S. statute based on it are clear that what is required are acts aimed at destroying a group “in whole or in part.” Both the drafting history of the U.N. Convention and its application by courts around the world have rightly shown that destruction “in part” is sufficient to a finding of genocide.

Similarly, there is ample precedent for finding that forced deportation—often in concert with killing, rape and other forms of violence—qualifies as genocide.

As to the issue of intent, it should be noted that individual accounts, the collective evidence and ISIS’ own public statements make clear that it targets Christians and seeks to destroy Christianity in the lands they control and beyond.

ISIS’ magazine is called Dabiq, named after the place where ISIS believes it will win a battle against the army of Rome. It routinely refers to Dabiq as the location where it will destroy the “Crusader army,” an unmistakable Christian reference. The magazine last year published a picture of Pope Francis, captioning him as “the crusader pope.” Dabiq proclaims ISIS’ intention to destroy Christians:

We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted. This is His promise to us; He is glorified and He does not fail in His promise. If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and they will sell your sons as slaves at the slave market.

Finally, this certainty is the one that should pulse in the heart of every mujihid from the Islamic State and every supporter outside until he fights the Roman crusaders near Dabiq.

It has also stated:

And nothing changes for the Islamic State, as it will continue to pronounce takfir [abandonment of Islam] upon the Jews, the Christians, the pagans, and the apostates from the Rāfidah, the Nusayriyyah, the Sahwah, and the tawāghit [disbelievers]. It will continue to wage war against the apostates until they repent from apostasy. It will continue to wage war against the pagans until they accept Islam. It will continue to wage war against the Jewish state until the Jews hide behind their gharqad trees. And it will continue to wage war against the Christians until the truce decreed sometime before the Malhamah. Thereafter, the slave markets will commence in Rome by Allah’s power and might.

Elsewhere, Dābiq states ISIS' desire to target Christians under any number of ruses. In addition, a video released just last month by ISIS in Libya states that its adherents should "Fight and kill them from their Great Priest (Tawadros II) to the most pathetic one." A second speaker calls for Egyptians to "terrorize the Jews and burn the slaves of the Cross."

ISIS statements related to the beheading of the Coptic Christians brand Christians as "polytheists" for their belief in the Trinity, making Christians the same as "pagans" in their view.

The plain meaning of these statements, especially in context, is clear: The so-called Caliphate has slated Christianity for destruction—now and in an apocalyptic battle to come.

Consistent with its threats have been ISIS' actions. Our fact-finding mission to Iraq earlier this month found stories of rape, kidnapping, forced conversions and murder, in addition to property confiscation and forced expulsion. Almost everything we discovered has not been previously reported.

What is publicly known and what our investigation uncovered is substantial, but it has become clear that this still represents only the tip of the iceberg. We are now being sent new stories and new evidence daily. So what is known about ISIS' genocidal atrocities will only increase, and the known scale of the horrors that have occurred can only expand with time.

The victims we met or learned of were many. Their stories were of traumatic experiences they and others had endured. There were also the stories of those who could no longer tell them—the killed and the missing. Some of those we learned about had been wounded physically or emotionally, or both.

The story of the mother whose child was taken from her arms by ISIS has been reported in the media. We found that her experience was not isolated. Similar reports of family members, adults and children alike, were common.

Those we interviewed showed great strength. And some showed great heroism as well, despite the dangers to themselves. There was Khalia, a woman in her fifties, who was captured and held hostage along with 47 others. During her 15 days in captivity, she rebuffed demands to convert, despite a gun being put to her head and a sword to her neck. She literally fought off ISIS militants as they tried to rape the girls, and again later when they tried to take a 9-year-old as a bride. Because of the abuse, 14 men gave in to ISIS' demands and said they would convert to Islam. Khalia would not. Ultimately, the hostages were left in the desert to walk to Erbil. Others in Kurdistan affirmed without prompting that "she had saved many people."

Like the Yazidis, Christian women face sexual slavery, a main tool the "Caliphate" uses to recruit young men and to exterminate religious groups. A now infamous ISIS slave menu lists the prices by age for "Christian or Yazidi" women on sale in their slave markets.

Murder of Christians is commonplace. Many have been killed in front of their own families. The Syriac Catholic Patriarch of Antioch, many of whose flock lived on the Nineveh plain or in Syria, reports that 500 people were killed by ISIS during its takeover of Mosul and the surrounding region. In Syria, where the organization Aid to the Church in Need has reported on mass graves of Christians, Patriarch Younan estimates the number of Christians "targeted and killed by Islamic terrorist bands" at more than 1,000.

Melkite Catholic Archbishop Jean-Clément Jeanbart of Aleppo estimates the number of

Christians kidnapped and/or killed in his city as in the hundreds, with as many as "thousands" killed throughout Syria.

In Nineveh, many more were taken hostage seemingly at random, or demanded as hostages in exchange for their families to leave. Many of these have not been heard from thereafter.

Shockingly, some see what is happening at the hands of ISIS as not genocidal to Christians. At the root of this argument seems to be the idea that Christians have not been targeted in the same way as others. This is not true. First, Christians have been attacked throughout the region, not simply in the Nineveh area or only during the summer of 2014. Christians have been attacked and killed by ISIS and its affiliates in Syria, Libya, Yemen and surrounding areas. Even before ISIS was constituted, Christians found themselves victims of its predecessors: the Islamic State in Iraq, Al Qaeda and other radical groups.

Some argue that Christians should be excluded from a genocide declaration because ISIS supposedly allows Christians to pay jizya—a tax historically made available in Islam to Christians in Muslim lands—while denying this option to groups like the Yazidis, who are considered "pagans" by Islam.

The premise is false, because what ISIS calls jizya is not comparable to the historical understanding of that term. Rather, jizya—like so many theological concepts that ISIS holds—can mean something contrary to historic Islamic practice, or it can mean nothing at all. As used by ISIS, it is almost always a term for extortion and a prelude or postscript to ISIS violence against Christians.

In Nineveh, demands for so-called jizya payments were a prelude to killings, kidnappings, rapes and the dispossession of the Christian population. Not surprisingly, the Christian negotiator Father Emmanuel Adelkello and the other Christians saw this as a "a ploy from which ISIS could keep the Christians there to further take advantage of them and abuse them."

In Raqqa, the offer was made after ISIS had already closed the churches, burned bibles and kidnapped the town's priests.

It is little wonder that Alberto Fernandez—Middle East scholar and, until recently, a coordinator of U.S. government ideological counterterrorism messaging—found ISIS jizya to be "more a Satan Caliphate publicity stunt than a careful recreation of jizya as practiced by the early Caliphs." He added that this shows that ISIS is not similar "to the sprawling pluralistic caliphates of history."

Furthermore, self-styled ISIS Caliph Abu Omar al-Baghdadi has admitted for nearly a decade that Christians no longer qualify for the historical protection offered by Islamic law. And under his leadership, during the Islamic State's attack on Our Lady of Salvation Church in Baghdad in 2010, "the gunmen made at least four claims [justifications] for the killings, two general and two specific: all of the Christians were infidels; it is permitted to kill them; the killing was in retaliation for the burning of a Koran by an American pastor, and was also in retaliation for the alleged imprisonment of two supposed Muslim women converts in Egypt."

The Knights of Columbus became involved in supporting Christians and other religious minorities in this region because of our long-standing humanitarian activity and support for religious freedom at home and around the world.

Beginning in 2014, our organization began raising money for refugee relief in the Middle East. These funds have helped Christian, as well as Yazidi and Muslim, individuals

and families. We have provided funding for general relief in Aleppo; education for refugees now living in Jordan; and food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care in Kurdistan. One of the clinics we fund in Dohuk has been visited by several Yazidi women who recently escaped ISIS sexual slavery, and it has referred them for psychological or specialist medical treatment. To date the K of C has raised more than \$8 million for this cause.

Long before our involvement on behalf of Christians in the Middle East, the Knights of Columbus stood with persecuted Christians around the world. In the 1920s, we raised awareness and lobbied the American government to help stop the persecution of Catholics in Mexico under the government of Plutarco Calles. In the 1930s the K of C successfully fought against Mussolini's attempted closure of our charitable work in Italy, and throughout the Cold War we stood in solidarity with, lobbied for and supported those who were not permitted to practice their faith in the Communist bloc.

Today, the threat is the global persecution of Christians, which the Pew Forum and The New York Times have described as occurring at an unparalleled level. What is happening in the Middle East is a microcosm of this, and perhaps its clearest example. It is for this reason that we have partnered with In Defense of Christians in producing this report and sponsoring the national television advertising campaign in support of the petition located at www.StopTheChristianGenocide.com.

It is our hope that our efforts in this regard will be helpful in highlighting and bettering the plight faced at the hands of IS by religious minorities—including Christians. And it is our belief that a declaration of genocide is a key component in that process.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the law states that the President shall consider what actions can be taken to ensure that those who are responsible for genocide are brought to account for such crimes in an appropriate constituted tribunal.

Further, the President is required to develop a clear strategy to stop these organizations based on the most recent iteration of the National Defense Authorization Act that was passed in November.

As I mentioned earlier, since his retirement from Congress, my predecessor, Congressman Wolf, has worked tirelessly on these issues. I am so pleased, and I know he will be so pleased, to see so many of his former colleagues and all of us who were able to pass this unanimously this evening. I thank him for his strong voice and for all of the strong voices who were here tonight so that we can, once again, be standing throughout this country and throughout the world as that beacon of light which so many of my colleagues have talked about.

I thank the gentleman for having this Special Order today. I just close in asking for prayer for all of those who are suffering around the world and for all of those souls who have been tormented, tortured, and killed.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank Congresswoman COMSTOCK for her powerful words and her faithful leadership. The gentlewoman had big shoes to fill after Frank Wolf's retirement, and I am sure

tonight, if he is watching, he would be very proud of her efforts in this regard and in so many others, leading the fight to try to stop the assaults on human dignity.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a much younger man, I entered the Sinai Desert in Egypt. The year was 1979. I was a college student. At the site of the fighting that had taken place between Israel and Egypt in the 1973 war, there was an all-too-familiar scene of a concrete pile of rubble. Scrawled on the side of the concrete pile, both in Arabic and in English, were the words: "Here was the war, and here is the peace."

Mr. Speaker, maybe, just maybe, on this, the remnants of this Christian church where this cross was planted by this Yazidi man who returned to his hometown of Sinjar just recently in January, one day will see those same words that here was the war, but now here is the peace.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 2426.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRAT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS—THE WORK CONTINUES: WHY VOTING MATTERS IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to add any extraneous materials relevant to the subject matter of this discussion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening for tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour: The Work Continues—Why Voting Matters in the African American Community.

I am so proud to join my classmate, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES from the Eighth District of New York. He is a member of the House Judiciary Committee. He continues to be a tireless advocate for social justice, working to reform our criminal justice system and to eliminate the overcriminalization of the African American community.

Mr. Speaker, we are here to discuss the current state of voting rights in America, which, unfortunately, are under assault. The freedom to vote is one of America's most fundamentally, constitutionally guaranteed rights. It was 51 years ago this month, Mr. Speaker, that over 600 peaceful, orderly protesters set off to march from Selma, Alabama, to the State capitol in Montgomery to demonstrate the need for voting rights in the State.

Last week, our Congressional Black Caucus chair, Chairman BUTTERFIELD, stated at the first in a series of CBC hearings about the current state of voting rights in America and that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is probably one of the most significant pieces of legislation that was ever passed in the United States Congress.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, as we know, in 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down this crucial provision of the Voting Rights Act in the Shelby County v. Holder decision. Our work continues because by invalidating section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, the Supreme Court opened the doors for ways to reduce the voting power of minority communities and it put in place new voting restrictions in an effort to make it harder for millions of Americans to vote.

Our democracy has far too many missing voices, particularly those who are already at a disadvantage due to deep-rooted racial and class barriers in our society. By exercising our right, we can do great things. We can hold this country accountable. We can advocate for legislation that supports social and economic progress, equality and fairness for all Americans. We can champion policies that create and sustain jobs and that protect against cuts to social and economic programs that are vital to our most at-risk populations. We can move forward on efforts to address the school-to-prison pipeline and criminal justice reform. We know that the inequalities in access to quality health care still exist between races and that more and more Black children are victims of failing schools.

Mr. Speaker, I am calling on all citizens, including on our community and national leaders, to join the Congressional Black Caucus to work to eliminate voter suppression and to restore what so many people fought for, marched, and died for—yes, the Voting Rights Act. It is up to all of us to protect the most at-risk among us and to expand opportunity for all people. That begins with passing a voting rights act. Our work still continues, Mr. Speaker.

This week, we are celebrating Women's History Month, and I must note the powerful impact that African American women are having at the polls. In the past two Presidential elections, Black women led all demographic groups in voter turnout. That is why voting matters to African American communities. Black women make up the most dynamic segment of the rising American voters. A great civil rights leader said that women are

among the greatest leaders of social reform, and they are fighting, literally fighting, for their political rights.

This past Saturday I had the opportunity to be with the mothers of the movement. We know who they are. They are the mothers of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Dontre Hamilton, Jordan Davis, Sandra Bland, and Hadiya Pendleton; and we have all heard what happened to their children.

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, we are calling for action on gun control. We need to do more than just stand up on this floor for a moment of silence. We need to make sure that we are passing gun control legislation, commonsense legislation, that keeps the guns out of the hands of the most dangerous individuals. It is time for us to protect our children.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to give you some examples of what we should include in our call for action.

I go first to my good friend and colleague and classmate who brought it to my attention that we stand up for a moment, and then we sit down. Then we come back to this floor, and it is business as usual. We talk about wanting to keep our families safe, and we talk about the mental health issues. That is all we do, Mr. Speaker. We talk about it.

Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY of Illinois' Second District has legislation, H.R. 224, which would require the Surgeon General of Public Health Services to submit to Congress an annual report on the effects of gun violence on public health. This bill has 140 Democrat cosponsors. I am asking my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to step up and do more than just stand up for 30 seconds.

I am calling on Congress to act on Congressman JAMES CLYBURN of the Sixth District of South Carolina's legislation, H.R. 3051, the Background Check Completion Act, which would guarantee that no gun is sold by a licensed dealer until a background check is completed.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to say that I am a cosponsor of both of these bills.

I will go on and tell you about Chairman BUTTERFIELD, the chair of our Congressional Black Caucus. He understands that our work continues, because he has focused his efforts on promoting anti-poverty programs and on expanding economic development and job creation. There are a number of things that have happened in his State.

For example, the Moral Mondays are protests in North Carolina that are led by religious progressives. These protests are in response to several actions by the government of North Carolina, which was elected into office in 2013. These events, which spread throughout the South, helped bring attention to voting rights, criminal justice reform, and workers' rights. I think it is very important for us to note that.

Mr. Speaker, tonight my coanchor and I will talk about a number of

issues that explain why our work continues. We are going to talk about why in African American communities it is important for us to understand, if we don't diversify those who are going to vote, we don't represent the diversity of this great America that we are here to protect and to serve.

□ 2030

It is not just members of the Congressional Black Caucus who value and understand the importance of us coming together, the importance of us celebrating our rich history, all tied to the Voting Rights Act, all tied to the movements that we have had of the past.

Let me give you a great example because I am so proud that I am going to have the privilege to yield time to my good friend, Congressman JOHN LARSON from the First District of Connecticut.

He is here, Mr. Speaker, tonight to join with us as we talk about our rich history. He is going to share with us information about the 51st anniversary of President Johnson's "We Shall Overcome" speech, which was given on March 15, 1965.

I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio and the gentleman from New York for this opportunity to join with them this evening.

I am especially proud to associate myself with the gentlewoman's remarks and all that the Congressional Black Caucus has stood for as I would generally acknowledge that I think most of Americans stand for as well.

I thank them as well for pointing out a historic event that is happening and, in fact, will happen tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress.

Tomorrow is March 15. As the gentlewoman mentioned, it was 51 years ago that President Lyndon Baines Johnson gave his now famous "We Shall Overcome" speech.

It was President Johnson that recognized 8 days after Bloody Sunday what the Nation needed to do. He did this at great political risk, but he did it because of the sacrifice that so many had made.

Tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress we will celebrate two American heroes with the idea that it is far more important to come together as a Nation and understand that these issues that we face and struggle with aren't Democrat or Republican, but at their very core are American.

I want to commend the Bipartisan Policy Center for establishing what will be the first Congressional Patriot Award that will be presented tomorrow evening to JOHN LEWIS from Georgia and SAM JOHNSON from Texas.

This honor will be perpetuated forever. Not only will it be a medal in recognition of their patriotic service to the country, but of their service here in the United States Congress.

One person was nearly beaten to death by the Alabama police, the other

nearly beaten to death by the Vietcong and imprisoned for 8 years, 42 months, in solitary confinement. It was a momentous time in our history in 1965.

Both of these gentlemen serve in the United States Congress. Both of them had to overcome in their lives incredible obstacles. Both of them, after their experience in 1965 and beyond, came back to serve their country, to continue to organize, to continue, in the case of SAM JOHNSON, to be a flight commander.

JOHN LEWIS, as we all know, is the conscience of the House of Representatives. SAM JOHNSON is the most admired Republican on the floor. They are both iconic and American heroes, and tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress they will be recognized.

The Bipartisan Policy Center has been helped by the Library of Congress, the fortress of knowledge, an institution started by the United States Congress, and houses our great history.

Tomorrow on display will be the documents of the civil rights movement and the direct participation of JOHN LEWIS and the documents about the Vietnam war and the captivity and imprisonment of SAM JOHNSON.

Speaking tomorrow evening on behalf of SAM JOHNSON will be JOHN MCCAIN. Who better to speak about being imprisoned in the Hanoi Hilton? Who better to speak about the sacrifice that SAM JOHNSON made, that his family made, for people who put their country first?

We will be honored tomorrow to have a former Member of this body, an ambassador of the United States, and the mayor of Atlanta in Andrew Young being here tomorrow evening.

Who better to talk about all the issues that the gentlewoman from Ohio and the gentleman from New York are bringing to the forefront today than the person who was there by Martin Luther King's side, a colleague of JOHN LEWIS? JOHN LEWIS holds the seat that Andrew Young occupied in this body.

Andrew Young continues to be an advocate for voting rights and is in the forefront of that continued and epic battle that goes on in this country. It will be an outstanding evening.

But the point of it all is to understand that, as Members here in the United States Congress, in the House of Representatives, we must come together and, as President Johnson said 51 years ago tomorrow evening, to overcome, to overcome not only racial prejudices, but to overcome disease, poverty, and ignorance, which is the real plague on this Nation that keeps us confined.

How fitting that this event takes place tomorrow evening and because of the benevolence of an outstanding person like David Rubenstein. Who better to interview JOHN LEWIS and SAM JOHNSON about their experience than David Rubenstein?

I thank my colleagues from the bottom of my heart for allowing me the opportunity here to echo the senti-

ments of their purpose here this evening and to acknowledge this event taking place tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress of distinguished Americans, their history forever perpetuated.

And as Webster says above us in the great quote here:

Let us all, in our time here, in our service to the country, do something worthy of being remembered.

Let us take to heart the example of JOHN LEWIS and SAM JOHNSON and note especially tomorrow that we shall overcome.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman JOHN LARSON.

As I was listening to him reflect on the wonderful program that we are all going to be able to participate in at the Library of Congress—as I listened to his words, 51 years ago the President of these United States could recognize what the Nation needed.

It disappoints me, as I stand here on this House floor and I think about voting rights and I think about the condition of this Nation today and where we are when we talk about casting our votes and who we are going to cast our votes for. I say thank you for Congressman JOHN LEWIS and Congressman SAM JOHNSON.

As I was listening to the gentleman, I thought about so many of the things that Congressman JOHN LEWIS has said to us not only on this floor, not only in private moments, but in our Congressional Black Caucus meetings.

He represents that sense of history of why we come to continue our work, why we come to continue to stand up for the voting rights.

Because he has said to us on numerous occasions, Mr. Speaker, that the vote is the most powerful and most nonviolent tool that we have in a democratic society. We must not allow the power of the vote to be neutralized. We must never go back.

So I thank Congressman LARSON for taking us forward, for taking us on March 15 on a journey that we will remember for a lifetime, because, you see, we stand on the shoulders of those individuals who came before us.

Now our voters stand on our shoulders. Our voters, Mr. Speaker, are wanting us, are thirsty for us, to stand up for them so that their vote counts.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my coanchor to share some thoughts with us on why our work continues, why it is so important in the African American community for us to stand up for not only African Americans, but for our citizens who are discriminated against, those who, when we talk about social and economic programs, we see the disparities in what happens to them in education, in health care, in housing, the juvenile justice system, the criminal justice system.

I could not think of any better coanchor or colleague, someone who is such a great orator, someone who, when he stands up, we listen.

Please, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES, share with us some of your thoughts.

I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman, Representative BEATTY, from the great State of Ohio for her leadership and for moving us forward throughout the past several weeks as it relates to the Congressional Black Caucus' Special Order, this hour of power.

It is 60 minutes where we have the opportunity to speak to the American people about issues of importance to our country, to our economy, to the integrity of our democracy as we are doing tonight. It is an honor to share with you today.

□ 2045

I also want to acknowledge and thank our colleague, JOHN LARSON from the great State of Connecticut, for his continuing leadership and for taking to the House floor today to highlight both the historic significance of the speech that President Johnson gave from this very Chamber 51 years ago, on March 15, 1965, about voting in America and ensuring that every single person, regardless of their race or their color or their background had an opportunity to exercise their franchise, and to point out to the American people that the Congress will pause tomorrow to honor two true American legends, Representative LEWIS and Representative JOHNSON, who served the American people before they arrived in the people's House and through their service here in the House of Representatives.

It is with great humility that I stand today to address a topic that I think is of particular significance at this moment in time that we face in America in terms of the turmoil that many may be feeling, watching, undergoing: the economic changes that have been experienced over the last few decades.

We know that the middle class, in many ways, has been left behind. Wages have remained stagnant, notwithstanding the increased productivity of the American people over the last 40-plus years. When the economy collapsed, many high-income earners were able to rebound in no small part as a result of the bailout that occurred. There are a lot of Americans who are still hoping, looking out for their opportunity to be brought back into the economic mainstream by the people they have sent to Congress to represent them.

Notwithstanding all of the challenges that we have to confront, whether that is our broken criminal justice system or the economy that has still not completely recovered, we have made substantial progress under the leadership of Barack Obama. But of course there is more that needs to be done, and we could welcome some cooperation from folks on the other side of the aisle because all of our constituents were hit hard in 2008, yet President Obama has largely been left to his own devices.

Notwithstanding all of these issues, central to how our government works

is the fact that it is designed to be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Abraham Lincoln, of course, famously uttered those words in his Gettysburg Address.

If we are going to have that type of government, then everybody needs the opportunity to be able to participate in choosing their representatives in government without obstacle or obstruction.

We understand this is a great country, but it is also a country that has had a stain on its history as it relates to denying some the opportunity to participate fully in American democracy. That is the reason, after all, that, in the aftermath of the Civil War that threatened to tear this country apart, we had a Reconstruction amendment related to slavery and then a Reconstruction amendment related to the equal protection under the law and due process for all Americans; and lastly, of course, with the 15th Amendment designed to make sure that, in the Constitution, racial discrimination, as it relates to the exercise of the franchise, would be prohibited.

But, unfortunately, notwithstanding the 15th Amendment being ratified and put into our Constitution, more than 100 years would pass by until this country really confronted the denial of the right to vote in a meaningful way, particularly in the Deep South, and it happened because of the efforts and sacrifice of a great many people: Dr. Martin Luther King, JOHN LEWIS, Andrew Young, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, the NAACP, and those foot soldiers who were on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965, and almost lost their lives when they were attacked without provocation by Alabama State troopers as they endeavored to cross that bridge on the way from Selma to Montgomery. That, of course, then prompted President Johnson to deliver that address, where he so famously uttered the words upon his conclusion that "we shall overcome."

The 1965 Voting Rights Act continues to be the most significant piece of civil rights legislation ever passed by this Congress, but unfortunately we know that it is currently under attack. It is under attack because the Supreme Court effectively, in the *Shelby v. Holder* case, eviscerated its impact by striking down section 4, so-called coverage clause, which effectively eliminated the Department of Justice's ability to require States with a history of voting rights discrimination to have to preclear any changes that it makes.

Now, what I have been struggling to figure out during my brief time here in the Congress is why voting rights has become such a controversial thing when, it seems to me, it is so central to the integrity of our democracy. For decades, in the aftermath of the passage of the Voting Rights Act, it was actually pretty bipartisan, this notion that in order for our democracy to

work there should be no artificial obstacles erected to prevent people—African Americans, Latinos, immigrant families, and others—from being able to participate in what basically makes America great, what makes us unique: the ability to elect our representatives and for there to be peaceful transitions of power regardless of ideology, regardless of your region, regardless of what State a President may come from in order to keep the Republic going.

When you look at the history of the Voting Rights Act, as I indicated, it has largely been, until recently, a bipartisan endeavor. In fact, every time the Voting Rights Act was reauthorized—and it has happened four times—not only did it pass with bipartisan majorities in the Congress, but it was signed into law each and every time by a Republican President.

In 1970, Richard Nixon signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. In 1975, Gerald Ford signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. Then in 2006, President George W. Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. This significant piece of civil rights legislation was enacted into law and then reenacted on every single occasion with the signature of a Republican President, indicating that voting, participation in the franchise, having the American people in their full, gorgeous mosaic elect their representatives is an American thing. But all of a sudden, it has become controversial.

Now, I don't know if the timing of the election of our current President has anything to do with that. Historians will make that analysis as they move forward. It is above my pay grade. I just find it interesting that this notion of voter fraud, which was always a fiction put forth by the defenders of the race-based Southern hierarchy to deny African Americans the right to vote—and was not an issue when Richard Nixon was elected; it wasn't an issue when Reagan was elected; it wasn't an issue when George Herbert Walker Bush was elected; it wasn't an issue when George W. Bush was elected, notwithstanding the fact that I am still not convinced he won the State of Florida—all of a sudden, in the aftermath of the election of President Barack Obama, apparently there has been an outbreak of this fever that we have got to deal with so-called voter fraud.

No evidence of the fraud, not a scintilla of evidence has been produced by a single proponent of this argument, but when people were elected in 2010, in the immediate aftermath of that election during President Barack Obama's first term, more than 180 different pieces of legislation in 41 States were introduced, all, in the opinion of many objective observers, designed to suppress the right to vote. And at the same time, this challenge was working

its way through the Supreme Court from, of all groups of people, Shelby, Alabama.

Now, the irony of that, JOHN LEWIS almost lost his life, as Representative LARSON indicated, on the Edmund Pettus Bridge down in Selma, Alabama; and yet the Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, in a case brought by the folks from Shelby County, apparently thinking that they were victims because of the oppressive nature of the preclearance provision, the Supreme Court, at least for the time being, bought that argument.

So we find ourselves now in a situation here in the Congress where the Court has said to us: Fix it; update the coverage formula. So bipartisan legislation has been introduced, championed by folks like JIM SENSENBRENNER, the author of the 2006 reauthorization and a very distinguished and respected former Republican chairman of the House Committee on the Judiciary, and, of course, JOHN CONYERS, JOHN LEWIS, JOYCE BEATTY, and many others on the Democratic side of the aisle. Yet we can't get a single hearing before the Committee on the Judiciary on something seemingly so fundamental to the integrity of our democracy.

We are not asking you to turn into progressive Democrats. Just act like Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, whom you hold up as someone who is the classic embodiment of conservative politics. Just act like Ronald Reagan did in 1982 or George W. Bush.

Let's fix the Voting Rights Act in advance of the American people having to determine what comes next as it relates to both this Congress and the Presidency—not because it is a good thing for Republicans or because it is a good thing for Democrats; it is a good thing for the country: full and robust participation.

I just want to add, as I close, that it seems to me that this would be a particularly significant time to deal with the Voting Rights Act and to make sure that everybody can participate fully in our democracy at a moment when many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the Senate have said: We want the American people to decide who fills the Supreme Court vacancy.

□ 2100

Now, I am a little skeptical about that, but let's assume that that is really your view of the world. If, in fact, you don't want to do your constitutional job right now—once the President sends up a Supreme Court nominee and gives that person an opportunity to be heard before the Senate and the American people—because you claim you want the American people to decide who that nominee is through the vehicle of a Presidential election—then let's make sure that all of America can participate in that process. That means let's remove any obstacles to voting in every community.

We haven't seen a hearing in the House, and we haven't seen a hearing in the Senate. I just don't understand. We have had no hearing on the Supreme Court nomination. We have had no hearing on the Voting Rights Act when the Supreme Court told us to fix it. What exactly is going on? The American people are wondering.

We see a lot of frustration right now out there in America directed at Washington. That is because oftentimes there are so many critical issues that we simply fail to deal with.

So I am just hopeful today that, as we mark this occasion tomorrow of these two American heroes being honored—Representative JOHNSON and Representative LEWIS—we can get back to doing the business of the American people in the spirit of service that they themselves have displayed through their life's work and deal with something so central to our democracy such as the right to vote in an unfettered fashion.

Mrs. BEATTY. Congressman JEFFRIES, you have given us a lot to reflect on tonight. You have given us the roll call of how President after President has reauthorized the Voting Rights Act.

As I was listening to you, it appears that there is an uncommon denominator that we now have in this great America: a Black man as President of these United States.

I want to stand here and say, Mr. Speaker, that I am very suspect when I listen to how eloquently my colleague walked us through the history and shared with us how 51 years ago our colleague, JOHN LEWIS, was putting his life at risk with other great leaders as a very young Black man, that it was because he understood what was at stake.

He was probably ahead of his time. But when you think about that, everyone in this Chamber should want to have that experience.

I can remember a year ago, almost to the date, that I took that journey to Selma, Alabama. I took that journey with Congressman JOHN LEWIS and some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who stood there and locked and latched hands and talked about how we should overcome.

For a moment, Congressman JEFFRIES, it gave me that hope that I came here for, that hope that one person can make a difference and change the lives of others.

It wasn't 48 hours later that we came back to this institution, to this House floor, and all of that was washed away. It was back to business as usual.

There were no hearings, whether it is a budget hearing for funds to fund things from our infrastructure, things to educate and take care of our infants and children, mental health that we have all come to an agreement on with all the things that have happened during the time you and I have been here, Congressman JEFFRIES, with the number of lives that have been lost.

I think about the Emanuel Nine. We talked about that commonality of putting more money into mental health. Yet, the President puts dollars in the budget and we can't get a hearing.

So why does our work continue? Our work continues because it is so important for us, as African Americans, to make sure we protect those who are most at risk.

Mr. Speaker, we have a huge job to do. We are 46 members strong. While we focus on the lives of African Americans and the African American community, we stand here and fight for all children of all races, all ethnicities, because that is what we do because we care.

But as I stand here today and reflect on Congressman JEFFRIES' outline of history, outline of the number of lives that have been lost, outline of the legal process and what we have gone through, it made me recall, Mr. Speaker, that a week ago I decided to write an editorial to my local newspaper, and it was published. Mr. Speaker, that editorial was titled: "Work to improve voting rights."

[From The Columbus Dispatch, Feb. 29, 2016]

WORK TO IMPROVE VOTING RIGHTS

(By Rep. Joyce Beatty)

As Black History Month closes, I am reminded of Martin Luther King Jr., who famously said, "We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now."

We have come a long way since the era of Jim Crow. Indeed, our nation has laws on the books protecting people from discrimination based on sex, age, race, religion, national origin and ethnicity. Moreover, each February, we collectively reflect on the important contributions and accomplishments African-Americans etched into the cornerstone of America.

Yet, the more things change, the more they stay the same. What do I mean?

Every year, without fail, we celebrate Black History Month and honor the many leaders, heroes and "sheroes" of the black community. However, we rarely discuss the systemic and pervasive barriers still preventing African-Americans from achieving the American Dream.

Our nation is still plagued by the vestiges of segregation and unequal laws and policies. Today, it is more difficult to exercise one's constitutional right to vote, not easier. Inequalities in access to quality health care still exist between races, and more and more black children are victim to failing schools.

As opposed to getting bogged down in the numbers and reciting a long list of statistics and historical grievances, I am calling on all people, including our community and national leaders, to join me in working to eliminate voter suppression I and to restore what so many people fought, marched and died for: the Voting Rights Act.

It is up to all of us to protect the most at-risk among us, to defend the foundation of our democracy and to expand opportunity for all people. It begins with the Voting Rights Act.

In Congress, I am working tirelessly to rebuild the very foundation of the Voting Rights Act undone by the Supreme Court's Shelby County v. Holder decision. As an original cosponsor of the Voting Rights Empowerment Act of 2015 (H.R. 12), I believe we must ensure every American has equal say and the opportunity to vote. This legislation

would do just that by expanding access and putting in place common sense protections for our nation's electorate, no matter the color of one's skin.

It takes a village. So, let's work together in our neighborhood, at work or with family and friends to make this change possible and to help guarantee every American has fair and equal access to the ballot box.

Black History Month should be about the progress that has been made and the journey that awaits us. Remember, the past is our experience, the present is our accountability and the future is our responsibility.

Mrs. BEATTY. It is 2016. I am writing an article that sounds like I was sitting in 1955. That gives me great concern.

So when I think about our topic tonight, our work continues. What matters in the African American community I think we have answered tonight.

Whether it was from Congressman JOHN LARSON, who is not a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, whether it is from Congressman SAM JOHNSON or Congressman JOHN LEWIS, Mr. Speaker, I say to you that we stand here as members of the Congressional Black Caucus because we are the conscience of the Congress.

Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 13 minutes remaining.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. JEFFRIES, as I listen to you talk about the rich history and what we are dealing with today, I think about you serving on the Judiciary Committee.

I think about how, as Members of Congress and members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we often talk about our broken prison system.

We often talk about what happens to young children who go to college and then find themselves in that pipeline of education to prison.

I would like to ask you how you think the decrease in Black voters will affect that broken system.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Well, it is a great question. I look at it in two ways. First, when you think about mass incarceration as a phenomenon, one that, hopefully, in this Congress we will be able to do something about, in recognition of the fact that America imprisons more people than any other country in the world, increasingly, we have become a country that over-incarcerates and under-educates. As a result, we have lost generations of young people, disproportionately, African Americans and Latinos.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon declared publicly that drug abuse was public enemy number one. At the time, there were less than 350,000 people incarcerated in America. That was the starting point of the war on drugs.

More than 40 years later we have now got 2.3 million people incarcerated in America. A significant number of those folks—approximately 50 percent at the Federal level and similar numbers at the State level—are there for non-violent drug offenses.

Yet, every single one of those people who have been incarcerated in America

has lost the right to vote, some permanently, some temporarily with an opportunity to perhaps recover it. More than a million people are currently incarcerated from the African American community. So our system is broken. Our democracy is in need of adjustment.

If there is not an understanding that the absence of refraining from participating in that democracy through exercising the franchise yields consequences that public policymakers will choose either intentionally or through benign neglect to allow things like mass incarceration to overwhelm a community, then we are going to continue to see things happen that are not in the best interest of America. Certainly, electoral participation matters to the African American community.

The other thing that we have got to look at in the context of the right to vote—and there is some bipartisan support because Senator RAND PAUL on the other side of the Capitol has been very visionary in this regard—is that disenfranchising people who have been incarcerated in America, paid their debt to society, have moved on with their life—but to permanently restrict them, even in some cases when the conviction is for a misdemeanor offense, is un-American.

But some have used this type of disenfranchisement related to the prison industrial complex to overwhelm many communities because of mass incarceration to, again, set up obstacles to full participation in American democracy.

So we have got to put everything on the table in terms of our effort to fix our broken criminal justice system, which I am pleased, to date, at least in the House on the Judiciary Committee, has been bipartisan in nature.

But we have to take an expansive approach to repairing the damage that has been done over more than 40 years of a failed war on drugs, with millions upon millions upon millions of people stamped with a criminal record, I believe in excess of 65 million people during that time period, disproportionately African Americans and Latinos.

It is one of many issues that is on the table that, hopefully, will result in folks understanding that the stakes are high as it relates to who represents you. And the vehicle is just to participate.

That is the great majesty of our democracy as it was conceived by the Founders and those who came after: Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, through electoral participation.

□ 2115

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. JEFFRIES, I paused for a moment as I was listening to you, and you are so absolutely right; the vehicle, the power of casting that vote, the power of making a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the things that is so significant about the Congressional Black Caucus, that is

our history. It is our fortitude to have the courage to always continue to fight and never give up, because we actually have members of the Congressional Black Caucus who were there during that time.

When you think about Members like Congressman JOHN LEWIS, when you think about Members like JOHN CONYERS, JOHN CONYERS, a Black man, will go down in history as the longest-serving man in this Congress. Just think about it. A man that shared an office for almost 2 decades with Rosa Parks, the modern civil rights leader who decided that she was going to sit down that day because she realized one person could make a difference.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have gone through our whole history of the Voting Rights Act, we have gone through the sections of the Constitution, we have gone through what the Supreme Court has done, and yet we can't get the reauthorization of our Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, I say this to you tonight. The Congressional Black Caucus will not give up. We are holding field hearings, as I speak, so we can collect the information to come back here and tell you that the vehicle for American people, that vehicle is the ballot box.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here today, we have resolved. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus don't come just to complain and put issues out there. We are scholars. We like hearing that we are the conscience of the Congress, but we are the scholars. We are Howard, and Morehouse, and Spelman, and Harvard, and Princeton, and Yale. We are the whole spectrum of this America that you and I serve.

So I ask you today, Mr. Speaker, to consider that when we stand up the next time on this House floor, why Members are sitting down. We are sitting down because I think you and Congressman JEFFRIES and all the rest of my colleagues in this Chamber, we have an obligation to do more.

Innocent lives are being taken, and there is something we can do about it. We could start with something that has been bipartisan. Congressman JEFFRIES mentioned it a number of times, and that is something as simple as passing a Voting Rights Act. That would make a difference.

I guess my question is: What are we afraid of?

Are we afraid if we increase the number of those who have been disenfranchised, those who have been discriminated against, that they will actually vote, they will actually have a voice to make a difference in the way they live in this wonderful America?

I am asking you to go to your Republican colleagues and ask them to stand with us that we can leave a great legacy in history, because history will be written. When the first Black President leaves these United States, we will read of all the wonderful things that President Barack Obama did.

But we will also have those who will write part of that history of us failing

to do our job. And I will reflect back on this day when Congressman JEFFRIES and I stood at this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour and we said, the work continues, and why it matters in African American communities that we vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, nearly 51 years ago the Voting Rights Act (VRA) was signed into law to prohibit racial discrimination in voting. It was a defining moment in our nation's history that would send a clear message that all voters should have free and fair access to the polls in the United States. The Voting Rights Act became a powerful tool of our democracy that protected voter participation of individuals from all backgrounds. It has given a voice to previously disenfranchised voters, particularly that of minorities who would otherwise be left out of the political process.

Since the passage of the VRA, various groups and individuals have endeavored to reverse those protections. In 2013 the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately struck down a key enforcement component of the VRA as unconstitutional. This decision has enabled a number of states across the country to move forward with discriminatory voter laws, the effects of which have not yet been fully realized.

Texas is one of 21 states that have implemented new restrictions on voting since the 2010 midterm election. Texas first passed two harsh voter mandates in 2012, which were ultimately blocked under Section 5 of the VRA. Texas re-implemented these laws requiring valid photo identification at the polls following the Supreme Court ruling—the first time a photo ID was required to vote in a federal election in 2014. The consequences in Texas alone have been dire and disproportionately impact minority voters. The U.S. Department of Justice originally estimated that the Texas law could prevent as many as 600,000 voters from casting their votes at the polls.

The African American community has faced many barriers to voting throughout our history. During the height of the Civil Rights Movement, thousands of protesters marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in order to protest the racial injustices in voting. The will of the people ultimately prevailed, resulting in the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 just five short months after the final march. It was an important struggle that still serves as a lesson for us today.

Voter disenfranchisement poses an incredible threat to the electoral process. The nationwide efforts to create barriers to voting have highlighted the importance of the protections afforded under the VRA. Voting is the principle means through which Americans can have a voice in the political process. It allows us to elect candidates who share a common vision for bettering our nation and advancing our social and economic progress. These efforts to disenfranchise voters stand contrary to our democratic principles as a nation and it is imperative that we fight to reinstate voter protections for all, which have only served to strengthen our democracy and engage voters in the political process.

DECLARATION OF GENOCIDE COMMITTED BY ISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is always an honor to be able to speak on this hallowed floor.

A report was made earlier today entitled, "House Poised to Declare ISIS Committing Genocide Against Christians, Other Minorities." And, in fact, this report says: "The House is poised Monday to approve a resolution that declares the Islamic State is committing genocide against Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East—putting even more pressure on the Obama administration to do the same ahead of a deadline later this week."

"The resolution passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee with unanimous support and is expected to pass the House with bipartisan backing."

"The resolution comes to a vote Monday evening, just days after the release of a graphic new report by the Knights of Columbus and In Defense of Christians on ISIS atrocities. The report made the case that the terror campaign against Christians and other minorities in Syria, Iraq, and other parts of the Middle East is, in fact, genocide."

"When ISIS systematically targets Christians, Yazidis, and other ethnic and religious minorities for extermination, this is not only a grave injustice—it is a threat to civilization itself," Representative Jeff Fortenberry, Republican, Nebraska, said in a statement. "We must call the violence by its proper name: genocide."

"The resolution will be voted on ahead of the congressionally mandated March 17 deadline for the Secretary of State John Kerry and the White House to make a decision on whether to make such a declaration. The measure is an effort to force the administration's hand on the issue, as the administration has so far declined to take an official position."

"Christians, Yazidis, and other beleaguered minority groups can find new hope in this transpartisan, ecumenical alliance against ISIS' barbaric onslaught," Fortenberry, who is co-chairman of the Religious Minorities of the Middle East Caucus and represents America's largest Yazidi community, said in the statement."

So the measure received the backing of the House Republican leadership, PAUL RYAN, calling on the Obama administration to take action like recent attacks against Christians.

The article goes on, from foxnews.com, indicating: "It is rare for Congress to make a genocide determination."

"In addition to the genocide resolution, the House is expected to vote on a measure to create an international tribunal to try ISIS members accused of atrocities."

Mr. Speaker, it is pleasing to report that H. Con. Res. 75, expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL—that is, the Islamic State; and it has used different names, ISIS, ISIL—against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, that passed by 393 yeas and zero nays.

It is deeply troubling that although this House, in a bipartisan way, could vote 393 for this resolution and zero against, that Secretary of State John Kerry and President Barack Obama are having trouble deciding what they should do.

Gee, is it possible they might just notice that in the House of Representatives we came together unanimously and said what ISIS has been doing is genocide?

For heaven's sake, for the sake of the Christians, the Yazidis, the Jews in the area, is it too much to ask that this United States administration take notice that there is a genocide going on?

And though the administration is not doing much of anything about it, is it too much to ask that this administration at least call it what it is; that this House, on both sides of the aisle, unanimously said the same thing?

Is it too much to ask, even if you are not going to fight the genocide, at least call it what it is, then that will embolden others with courage to stand up and fight more fearlessly? Is that too much to ask?

I hope and pray not, Mr. Speaker.

In the meantime, what we find here at home, while we are still having the administration struggle over whether to call genocide genocide, we have a report from ICE, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, it is revealed that 124 illegal immigrant criminals released from jail by the Obama administration since 2010 have been subsequently charged with murder.

The Center for Immigration Studies report on the data from ICE to the Senate Judiciary Committee added that the committee is not releasing the names of these masses of murder suspects.

"The criminal aliens released by ICE in these years—who had already been convicted of thousands of crimes—are responsible for a significant crime spree in American communities, including 124 new homicides after the thousands of crimes they have already committed before ICE released them. Inexplicably, ICE is choosing to release some criminal aliens multiple times," said the report written by CIS' respected Director of Policy Studies, Jessica M. Vaughan.

"She added that 75 percent were released due to court orders or because their countries wouldn't take them back."

"What's more, her report said that in 2014, ICE released 30,558 criminal aliens—that is illegal immigrants in the United States who committed

criminal atrocities—“who had been convicted already when they were released of 92,347 crimes.”

Wow. As the world suffers, as this administration cannot determine whether or not to call the genocide of Christians and other minority groups genocide; at the same time, it has been hard at work, out of those thousands, tens of thousands of aliens who have committed over 92,000 criminal acts against Americans here in this country, the administration has been hard at work and deported 3 percent of the tens of thousands of aliens illegally here who have committed over 92,000 crimes, and this administration has deported 3 percent.

□ 2130

So much for protecting Americans against all enemies foreign and domestic.

This article from Paul Bedard says: “Her analysis is the latest shocking review of Obama’s open-border immigration policy. And despite the high number of illegal immigrants charged with murder, the list doesn’t include those released by over 300 so-called ‘sanctuary cities’ and those ICE declined to even take into custody.

“She said that 124 criminal aliens released by ICE between 2010 and 2015 were charged with murder during that period and ‘associated with 250 different communities in the United States, with the most clustered in California, New York, and Texas.’”

I would assert parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, for those that are not California, New York, and Texas, you cannot think for a minute that this is not already in your State. If you haven’t heard about it, it is coming.

This says: “In a memo about the subsequent crimes of released illegals to Judiciary Committee Chairman Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, ICE said, ‘The aliens were charged with a total of 135 homicide-related crimes subsequent’”—for my liberal friends, that means after—“to release from ICE custody. As of July 25, 2015, a total of 39 convictions have resulted from these homicide-related charges. Of the 121 total aliens, 2 had homicide-related convictions prior to release from ICE custody.”

ICE released them knowing that they already had homicide-related convictions, and they were released to kill again upon the American public. Though they violated our laws to get here and they violate our laws to stay here, this administration has seen to their release upon the American public further.

“Vaughan added that ‘ICE reported that there are 156 criminal aliens who were released at least twice by ICE since 2013. Between them, these criminals had 1,776 convictions’”—that kind of sounds patriotic. Since 2013, ICE has released 1,776 criminals with 1,776 convictions before they are released in 2013, including burglary, larceny, you know, those things that hurt America.

This article from cis.org also says: “Only a tiny percentage of the released criminals have been removed—most receive the most generous forms of due process available and are allowed to remain at large, without supervision, while they await drawn-out immigration hearings. They are permitted to take advantage of this inefficient processing even though they are more likely to re-offend than they are to be granted legal status.”

Further down it says: “Some aliens had multiple ZIP Codes associated with them in ICE’s system, so the records include more ZIP Codes than the 121 individual criminal aliens charged”—with murder—“through 2014. Three more were charged in 2015; ICE did not provide their ZIP Codes. ICE reported there are 156 criminal aliens who were released at least twice by ICE since 2013.”

That, of course, was in the other article.

It goes on to say: “ICE has previously disclosed that 75 percent of the homicidal criminal aliens were released due to court orders.”

Most of those would be immigration judges who sit at the discretion of the Attorney General of the United States. So perhaps people can let our Attorney General know that they would like our Attorney General to pick some immigration judges who might actually enforce our law instead of forgo the law so criminal aliens can commit more crimes against Americans.

I know, I understand there is so much going on, it is difficult to deal with all these issues at the same time, and that is why the administration is struggling so whether or not to officially say that the genocide going on in the Middle East of Christians and other minorities is actually genocide. It is just taking so much brain power. Even though in here it was 393-0, the administration right down on Pennsylvania Avenue here just can’t decide if it really might be genocide or not.

“In a separate communication, ICE provided a list of the countries that currently are uncooperative in accepting their deported citizens: Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Cape Verde, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe.”

Gee, Cuba?

It is a real shame that as this administration negotiated all the things that it was going to give to and do for Cuba that they didn’t apparently bring this issue up: Oh, by the way, the criminal aliens that you have had come into our country are coming back to your country because they are your citizens illegally in our country. They are coming back to you, like it or not.

Apparently, I guess maybe with all the concentration on whether genocide is genocide, they weren’t able to remember to bring that up to Cuba or to China.

In Afghanistan, one of my Muslim friends who is a great leader there in Afghanistan pointed out a few years ago when he was talking about the leverage that the United States has and should use to get Afghanistan to do the right thing by its people and by the United States, I said: Well, why do you think—this was in a visit in Afghanistan. I said: Why do you think we have much leverage? This is a few years ago. He said: Do you know what our annual budget is for the government in Afghanistan? No. I didn’t know. He said: Around 12 billion American dollars. Do you know how much of that the United States provides? He said: We provide about 1½ billion of our 12. You provide most of the rest of it. He said: Yes, you have got plenty of leverage.

But, apparently, this administration, maybe again they are so flustered in trying to decide if ISIS, who has expressly indicated they want to wipe out all Christians and they want to wipe Israel off the map, they are trying to decide if that means that is really a genocide, so they haven’t had time to notice that we have massive leverage over the Afghan Government to get them to do the right thing and take back their criminal aliens that are in this country illegally and send them back and take them; otherwise, the 10, 12 of your budget that we provide may not get provided anymore.

But again, I know this administration doesn’t want to offend people that are killing American citizens. I get that. It is special being that sensitive. Algeria, China, India, Iran, Mr. Speaker, I just can’t help but wonder if, before the President authorized \$100 billion to \$150 billion going to Iran, if maybe it occurred in someone’s mind: Do you know what? I am going to save some American lives by forcing Iran to take back the criminal aliens from Iran that are not lawfully here in the United States.

I wonder if anybody in this administration maybe thought about that. Did they think about it and send the President the message and it just didn’t get to the President? Or it didn’t get to John Kerry, and they didn’t think about it on their own: Gee, do you know what? We know Iran has already said they are going to spend some of that \$100 billion, \$150 billion on weapons systems on more terror groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. Yeah, they have said that we are going to spend more money on all these things. We knew that. Did it occur that that is bad enough that you are giving money that is going to be used to kill Americans, Christians, Jews, Yazidis, it is going to be used to terrorize the world? Maybe you could have helped American citizens out by saying: And, by the way, before we release it, you are going—and never mind that they violated the agreement over and over—but you, Iran, are going to need to accept back the criminal aliens from your country that are killing and terrorizing Americans in our country illegally.

Did nobody think of that? It is incredible, just incredible. Americans are suffering.

Then we get this report from cis.org that 61 million immigrants and their children, young children, now live in the United States. Now, most of those, I think 43 million or so, are here legally. But it is worth noting that the number of immigrants and their children grew six times faster than our Nation's population between 1970 and 2015.

From 1970 to 2015, our United States population has grown by 59 percent. That is a good, healthy growth. In the meantime, the percentage of immigration growth, or the number of immigrants in the United States—first generation, that is. Most all, everybody here, even Native Americans weren't native probably at one time. They have come across somewhere. But first-generation immigrants who actually immigrated in with children, that number has grown by 353 percent over that same period.

In many States, the increase in the number of immigrants and their minor children from 1970 to 2015 has been nothing short of astonishing. In Georgia, the population grew 3,058 percent; whereas, before that, it grew from 55,000 immigrants to 1.75 million immigrants. That is just in Georgia. So the immigrant level grew 20 times faster, 25 times faster, than the overall State population.

So thank God for immigration. Thank God for legal immigration, that is. But when we abandon the rule of law and don't give ourselves time to welcome legal immigrants into this country and educate them—there is a reason that they have to be educated and are supposed to learn our language and supposed to learn some history, because there is a tremendous amount of responsibility that comes with the right to vote. You need to understand how you say what Ben Franklin said was “a republic, Madam, if you can keep it.” You cannot keep a republic if you don't educate people that are coming in and who are foreign to the idea of the responsibilities of maintaining a republic. You don't keep it. You can't keep it.

On the wave of that came this editorial from Dan Hannan, a member of the European Parliament, dated today. Apparently, he spent part of last summer volunteering in a hostel for under-age migrants in the south of Italy. He talks about the migrants that came in.

He says: “I have seen refugee columns before, and they tend to be made up disproportionately of women and children. Of the boat people landed by the coast guard while I was in Italy, more than 80 percent were young men. Young men who, I noticed, took out smartphones when they disembarked and looked for Wi-Fi so as to tell their relatives” how good it was.

□ 2145

He says:

“Official policy in Europe is based on a misdiagnosis. The migrants are treat-

ed as refugees, and there is an implicit assumption that their displacement is somehow our fault. In the weirdly narcissistic tradition of the Left, the West is simultaneously blamed for having intervened in Libya and for not having intervened in Syria. But the lads I was working with in Italy were from countries that we never bombed—except with aid money.”

Mr. Speaker, it is time we look seriously at the oath every Member of Congress, the Senate, the President, the Vice President, everybody in elected Federal office takes. We are supposed to defend this Constitution. That means we are to provide for the common defense against all enemies, foreign and domestic. It is high time we took that more seriously.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1755. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James “Maggie” Megellas Post Office.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4632. A letter from the Acting Director, Legislative Affairs, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Conservation Stewardship Program [Docket No.: NRCS-2014-0008] (RIN: 0578-AA63) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4633. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Legal, Federal Deposit

Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's joint interim final rules — Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions, and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks (RIN: 3064-AE42) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4634. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final evaluation of vendor submittal — Summary of BWRVIP-18 Review in Support of GAO-001 received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4635. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a notice of the Air Force's Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Indonesia, Transmittal No. 15-81, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2776(b)(1); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(b) (as amended by Public Law 106-113, Sec. 1000(a)(7)); (113 Stat. 536); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4636. A letter from the Director, Presidential Appointments, Department of State, transmitting notifications of nine federal vacancies, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4637. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rights-of-Way on Indian Land [156A2100DD/AAKC001030/A0A501010.999900 253G] (RIN: 1076-AF20) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4638. A letter from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting the Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States for the September 17, 2015, session and September 9, 2015, special session, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 331; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4639. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Applicants for VA Memorialization Benefits (RIN: 2900-AO95) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4640. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Vet Centers (RIN: 2900-AP21) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4641. A letter from the Chief Impact Analyst, Office of Regulation Policy, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Veterans Transportation Service (RIN: 2900-AO92) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4642. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury,

transmitting the Department's final rule — Expansion of the Willamette Valley Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2015-0008; T.D. TTB-134; Ref: Notice No.: 152] (RIN: 1513-AC21) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4643. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Regulations under IRC Section 7430 Relating to Awards of Administrative Costs and Attorneys' Fees [TD 9756] (RIN: 1545-AX46) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4644. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Modification of Rev. Rul. 2005-3 (Rev. Rul. 2016-8) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4645. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's temporary regulations — Consistent Basis Reporting Between Estate and Person Acquiring Property From Decedent [TD 9757] (RIN: 1545-BM98) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4646. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Determination of Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction for 2016 [Notice 2016-21] received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4647. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — Utility Allowances Submetering [TD 9755] (RIN: 1545-B191) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 2745. A bill to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority (Rept. 114-449). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2273. A bill to amend the Colorado River Storage Project Act to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir; with amendments (Rept. 114-450). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4427. A bill to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; with an amendment (Rept. 114-451). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2984. A bill to amend the

Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review (Rept. 114-452). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. STIVERS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 640. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy (Rept. 114-453). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 4729. A bill to provide for the more accurate computation of retirement benefits for certain firefighters employed by the Federal Government; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BUCK, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MESSER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. PALMER, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. RIBBLE, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4730. A bill to provide for a congressional reauthorizing schedule for unauthorized Federal programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, Appropriations, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia):

H.R. 4731. A bill to provide for an annual adjustment of the number of admissible refugees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RIBBLE (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. GROTHMAN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4732. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish rules for payment for graduate medical education (GME) costs for hospitals that establish a new medical residency training program after hosting resident rotators for short durations; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4733. A bill to permit the United States Capitol Police to accept certain prop-

erty from other Federal agencies and to dispose of certain property in its possession; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4734. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to permit candidates for election for Federal office to designate an individual who will be authorized to disburse funds of the authorized campaign committees of the candidate in the event of the death of the candidate; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4735. A bill to establish a working capital fund for the Architect of the Capitol, to permit the Architect of the Capitol to use certain funds to operate a shuttle service for Members and employees of Congress to travel to and from the House Office Buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4736. A bill to remove from the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System certain properties in New Jersey; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4737. A bill to protect State and Tribal sovereignty from unwarranted infringement by an independent agency of the Federal government by requiring the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to justify certain proposals to preempt State and Tribal law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (for himself and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4738. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Ms. GABBARD):

H. Con. Res. 124. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the lasting significance of National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H. Res. 638. A resolution recognizing the life and legacy of Henrietta Lacks in honor

of Women's History Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin:

H. Res. 639. A resolution authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15-674; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, and Mrs. LAWRENCE):

H. Res. 641. A resolution expressing support for designation of March 14, 2016, as "National Pi Day"; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. DENT, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. BUCK):

H. Res. 642. A resolution recognizing magic as a rare and valuable art form and national treasure; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 4729.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 4730.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 7, Clause 1: "All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other Bills."

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time."

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.R. 4731.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 4 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution—The Congress shall have Power to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States.

By Mr. RIBBLE:

H.R. 4732.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to regulate interstate commerce.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4733.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4734.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4735.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4736.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Clause 8, Section 1

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4737.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States."

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. "To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes."

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18. "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER:

H.R. 4738.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Commerce Clause

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 183: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 184: Mr. PITTINGER.
H.R. 228: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 244: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 288: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 292: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 347: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 430: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 540: Mr. NADLER and Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 563: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 581: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 605: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 619: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 624: Mr. WELCH and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 664: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 793: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 799: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 800: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 816: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 822: Mr. POMPEO and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 842: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 846: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 923: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. LATTI.
H.R. 953: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 986: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 1112: Mr. WELCH and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 1117: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1196: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 1197: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 1198: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1220: Mr. CROWLEY and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 1221: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1336: Mrs. BLACK and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1356: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 1422: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 1427: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 1453: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 1516: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1545: Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 1550: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 1586: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1625: Mr. BERA.

H.R. 1628: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1643: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 1650: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 1655: Ms. STEFANIK and Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 1706: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1728: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1814: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 1854: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1859: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 1887: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1894: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 1948: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico.

H.R. 2009: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 2096: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 2170: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 2216: Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 2257: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2404: Mr. RICHMOND and Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 2407: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2450: Mr. KEATING and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 2460: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 2461: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2500: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2589: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 2622: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 2698: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan and Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 2716: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 2739: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 2799: Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. CAPPs, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 2876: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2896: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.

H.R. 2901: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 2903: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2972: Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 2980: Mr. KIND, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 2998: Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 3011: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 3048: Mr. GUINTA, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 3051: Ms. ADAMS and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 3096: Mr. MOULTON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. RUSH, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 3119: Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. STIVERS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. POCAN, Mr. DOLD, Mr. KIND, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. DENT.

H.R. 3164: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 3209: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3222: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 3225: Mr. MARINO and Mr. VELA.

H.R. 3229: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 3235: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. MATSUI, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 3323: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 3326: Mr. PERRY and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3526: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 3535: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3559: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 3673: Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 3684: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 3706: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 3712: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 3713: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3779: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3799: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 3880: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 3886: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3892: Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 3913: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 3926: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 3948: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 4055: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 4062: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 4075: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 4087: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 4118: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4165: Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 4172: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4336: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 4342: Mr. REED.
H.R. 4365: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 4371: Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4396: Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 4422: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4462: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4474: Mr. BYRNE.
H.R. 4479: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4488: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 4497: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 4499: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. ABRAHAM.
H.R. 4513: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 4514: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 4529: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4540: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
H.R. 4543: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 4567: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4570: Mr. FATTAH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 4585: Mr. COHEN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 4592: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HIMES, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. PALLONE,

Mr. WALZ, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. KIND, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MENG, Ms. LEE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4595: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 4599: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 4611: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CLAY, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 4612: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 4615: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 4623: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 4625: Miss RICE of New York, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 4626: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 4633: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 4640: Mr. COFFMAN and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 4642: Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 4653: Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4665: Ms. NORTON and Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 4681: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. MOORE, Ms. LEE, Mr. CLAY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 4683: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4694: Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 4705: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 4715: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 4722: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. RENACCI.
H. Con. Res. 19: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H. Con. Res. 40: Ms. VELAZQUEZ, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. MOORE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GALLEGOS, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H. Con. Res. 75: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. ROUZER, and Mrs. NOEM.
H. Con. Res. 88: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
H. Con. Res. 96: Mr. RICHMOND.
H. Res. 540: Mr. TONKO.
H. Res. 586: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H. Res. 591: Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H. Res. 600: Ms. GABBARD and Mr. RICHMOND.
H. Res. 605: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. CHAFFETZ.
H. Res. 610: Mr. JONES.
H. Res. 617: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. COOK.
H. Res. 625: Mr. VARGAS.
H. Res. 630: Miss RICE of New York.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. SHUSTER

H.R. 4721 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative PALLONE, or a designee, to H.R. 3797, the SENSE Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the Clerk's desk and referred as follows:

50. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, NJ, relative to Resolution: 2016-183, supporting the President of the United States of America's current position and executive actions in regard to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents orders; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

51. Also, a petition of Mr. Gregory D. Watson of Austin, TX, relative to urging Congress to enact legislation which would require that an autopsy be conducted, and the results thereof be made public, whenever a still-serving President, Vice President, Member of Congress, Chief Justice or Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, or any Judge of any Federal Court dies; jointly to the Committees on House Administration, Oversight and Government Reform, and the Judiciary.



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WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016

No. 40

Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God only wise, great is Your faithfulness.

Inspire our lawmakers to focus on Your priorities, striving to do Your will on Earth even as it is done in Heaven. During moments of confusion, help them to whisper a prayer for Your wisdom. Remind them that You desire that they set their affection on the things above that will live beyond time into eternity. May they not forget that You expect them to be accountable to You and to be stewards of their talents and abilities. Lord, fill them with Your Spirit so that they will mount up with wings like eagles, running without weariness and walking without fainting.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

WORKING TOGETHER IN THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, last week the Senate took decisive action to address America's devastating prescription opioid and heroin epi-

demic by passing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is an important accomplishment for the American people. It is the latest example of a Republican Senate leading on important issues. It also reminds us what can be accomplished when Senators focus on issues where they can agree rather than only fighting about issues where they don't agree.

It is clear that Democrats and Republicans do not agree on whether the American people should have a voice in the current Supreme Court vacancy. Republicans know the American people elected a Republican Senate to be a check-and-balance to President Obama. We know the next Justice could dramatically change the direction of the Court for decades. We think the American people deserve a voice in that conversation. Democrats would rather the President make this incredibly consequential decision on his way out the door. This is one issue where we simply don't agree, so let's keep our focus on the areas where we can find agreement instead.

I ask colleagues to join us in continuing to do our work here in the Senate. As we do that, the American people can continue making their voices heard in this important national conversation. Passing CARA was a great example of what we can get done when we work constructively toward solutions.

This week we will have the opportunity to make progress on other issues, including one I would like to mention now.

Vermont recently passed food-labeling legislation that according to one study could increase annual food costs by more than \$1,000 per family. These aren't just Vermont families I am talking about; these are families all across our country.

The Senate will soon consider commonsense, bipartisan legislation that aims to ensure that decisions in one State or a patchwork of different State

laws do not hurt American families throughout our country—especially at a time when so many are already struggling to make ends meet. The goal is to set clear, science-based standards in order to prevent families from being unfairly hurt by a patchwork of conflicting local and State labeling laws passed in States and cities where they don't even live.

I would like to recognize the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Senator ROBERTS, for his continuing work on this issue. The Agriculture Committee moved to pass the chairman's mark last week with bipartisan support. I know Chairman ROBERT continues to work with Senator STABENOW, the ranking member, and others across the aisle on a pathway forward on legislation we can pass in the Senate to resolve this issue. I urge Members to continue working with him in that endeavor.

Let's not forget that this may well be our last chance to prevent the actions of one State—just one State—from hurting Americans in all the other States. Legislation to address this issue passed the House last summer with bipartisan support. With cooperation from across the aisle, we can take action on a bipartisan basis here on the Senate floor as well.

COAL FAMILIES

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on one final matter, when President Obama was a candidate, he boasted that his energy tax policies would make electricity prices skyrocket for American families. When President Obama took office, his administration declared a war on coal families and on their jobs. For a time, his administration tried to deny it was declaring war on anyone, but now we hear boasting from the highest ranks of the Democratic Party that these policies are going to put coal miners out of business.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Miners in Kentucky and across the country know that coal keeps the lights on and puts food on the table. What they want is to provide for their families. But here is how more Democrats seem to view these hard-working Americans and their families: just statistics, just the cost of doing business, just obstacles to their ideology. This is callous, it is wrong, and it underlines the need to stand up for hard-working, middle-class coal families. That is what I have done here in the Senate. That is what I will continue to do. I hope our colleagues will join me.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

Mr. REID. Madam President, GMO, genetically modified food—that is basically what it is. What we want is to make sure consumers know what is in their food. They deserve clear standards. They require the disclosure of what is in their food, not a voluntary standard that Senator ROBERTS is talking about bringing out of the committee. All that does is leave consumers in the dark, and that is the wrong way to go.

COAL MINER PENSIONS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I understand the Republican leader's concern about coal not being the way it was. It is simply that the American people have made a decision that we are going to have to look for another way to produce energy. There is still a place for coal in our society, but everyone has to acknowledge that it is not as it was a few years ago.

I wish the Republican leader cared more about moving to help the pensions of these coal miners. They are desperately looking for support. We support them on this side. All the coal miners support it. We can get no support from the Republicans. We tried during the work we did at the end of the year. We came close, but Republicans said no.

I want all those coal miners from Kentucky and around the country to understand that we are trying to help them with their pensions, but unless we get some help from the Republicans, there will be no support. That is too bad. We are trying. We are trying. We are trying.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Madam President, Senate Republicans have finally admitted that their obstruction of President Obama's Supreme Court nominee has nothing to do with precedent, it has nothing to do with history, it has nothing to do with

the Constitution, but it has everything to do with partisan politics.

Last Thursday, Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee forced Chairman GRASSLEY and the committee Republicans to debate the Supreme Court vacancy during a markup. Remember, this is the same markup the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, canceled a week earlier because he and Republicans didn't want to make the meeting open to the public. He tried to have a secret meeting; Democrats wouldn't agree.

On last Thursday when they finally had a meeting, the senior Senator from South Carolina, a Republican, said:

We are setting a precedent here today, Republicans are, that in the last year at least of a lame duck eight-year term—I would say it's going to be a four-year term—that you're not going to fill a vacancy of the Supreme Court based on what we're doing here today. We're headed to changing the rules, probably in a permanent fashion.

I applaud Senator GRAHAM's forthrightness in admitting what his Republican colleagues refuse to admit: Their obstruction of a Supreme Court nominee is unprecedented. The senior Senator from South Carolina said that, and that is what I have been saying.

So the question then remains, if denying President Obama's nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote has nothing to do with Senate precedent, then what is this all about? Fortunately, last Thursday also yielded an answer to that question. During an interview with a Wisconsin radio station, the Republican Senator from Wisconsin, Senator RON JOHNSON, was asked if he would treat a Supreme Court nominee from a Republican President differently. He answered:

Generally, and this is the way it works out politically . . . if a conservative president's replacing a conservative justice, there's a little more accommodation to it.

The Senator from Wisconsin admitted that he and his colleagues would accommodate the Supreme Court nomination from a Republican President. So Senate Republicans are talking out of both sides of their mouths. Republicans claim they are simply adhering to precedent, even as they admit they are permanently changing the way the Senate treats Supreme Court nominees.

Republicans claim they want to give the American people a voice. That is what elections are all about. President Obama's reelection was the American people's voice.

Republicans claim—I repeat—they want to give the American people a voice and wait until after a new President is sworn in, even while admitting they would consider a Republican President's nominee right now. It doesn't make sense. It is illogical. It is unfair.

The American people do not accept this duplicitous posturing. They don't accept it as a rationalization for why Republicans won't do their jobs.

Over the weekend, the editorial board of Iowa City Press-Citizen—the Presiding Officer's home State—made clear what they want Senator GRASSLEY and Senate Republicans to do: They want Republicans to follow the Constitution.

Partisan posturing to score points at the expense of Constitutional process doesn't change character based on the letter next to a lawmaker's name. . . . Currently, a Democrat is in the White House as this pitched battle is fought, but were the roles reversed, we would not alter our position. If, down the line, a Supreme Court Justice retired or died in a presidential election year with a Republican in power, we would similarly urge a fair hearing for that president's nominee.

The Senate's constitutional duty transcends partisan bickering. The people of Iowa and America don't want a Senate that treats its constitutional duties differently based on who is in the White House. They want a Senate that does its job. They want Republicans to do their jobs.

So I say to my Republican colleagues, enough with the hollow excuses and groundless rationalizations. Do your jobs and give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote.

Madam President, there is another aspect of this Supreme Court fight we must address. Already, as we know, Republicans are resorting to what they call piñata politics. That is what Senator CORNYN promised. Radical conservative groups are starting to run smear campaigns targeting President Obama's potential Supreme Court nominees. One of those potential nominees is from Iowa.

One such ad from the Judicial Crisis Network, a dark money, rightwing political organization that operates in total secrecy—not knowing where its money comes from; probably the Koch brothers because they fund most everything else—is especially appalling. The ad takes aim at an Iowan serving on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Jane Kelly. The accusations leveled against Judge Kelly are despicable, and they deserve to be answered by her home State Senator—I should say Senators.

Senator GRASSLEY is on record as having strongly supported Judge Kelly's confirmation to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. It was he who came to the floor in 2013 and read from a letter stating that Judge Kelly is "a forthright woman of high integrity and honest character . . . and exceptionally keen intellect." It was Senator GRASSLEY who told his colleagues at about the same time: "I am pleased to support her confirmation and urge my colleagues to join me." And Senator GRASSLEY's Judicial Committee, of which he was a senior member, even helped vet Judge Kelly's record before endorsing her confirmation to the bench.

If there was something wrong with her judicial nomination, he certainly didn't find it. Yet Senator GRASSLEY has been silent in the wake of these recent smears against Judge Kelly. I

know the senior Senator from Iowa has been busy listening to what the Republican leader's line is on the Supreme Court vacancy, but this disgusting rightwing attack from Republicans to a fellow Iowan—a judge he enthusiastically supported—demands a response.

Senator GRASSLEY needs to tell the people of Iowa whether he supports the smear campaign that his own Republicans are hurling at Judge Jane Kelly. Does he support the smear campaign? That is a question that needs to be answered, especially since the Judicial Crisis Network—this rightwing, secretly funded by dark money—has been in lockstep with Senator GRASSLEY's obstruction and even praising him while at the same time smearing Judge Kelly.

If he doesn't go on record, he needs to do something. I can't imagine why he wouldn't go on record denouncing this type of disgusting rhetoric. I look forward to the senior Senator from Iowa setting the record straight on his fellow Iowan and a judge whom he personally endorsed.

Madam President, there is no one on the floor. Will the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I rise today to speak about something that guides the work of each and every one of us—the U.S. Constitution. Each and every one of us has taken an oath of office to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. We all solemnly swear that we will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution and that we will faithfully discharge the duties of our office. Have some of the Senate Republicans forgotten this?

Last week a colleague was asked in a radio interview on a Wisconsin radio station if Republicans would be more likely to advance a Supreme Court

nomination had a Republican been elected President in 2012. He said: "Generally, and this is the way it works out politically, if you're replacing—if a conservative president's replacing a conservative justice, there's a little more accommodation to it." Do Senate Republicans really believe that they need a Republican President simply to do their jobs?

I would like to remind my colleagues that President Obama was elected to a 4-year term in 2012 with over 65 million votes. The American people decided who our President is, and according to the Constitution, the term the President earned has more than 300 days remaining. The voices of those 65 million Americans need to be heard and respected despite how much some people want to silence them, disrespect them, and ignore them.

On Supreme Court vacancies, the Constitution is also clear. Under article II of the Constitution, the President shall appoint judges to the Supreme Court and the Senate's role is to provide advice and consent. It is the constitutional duty of the President to select a Supreme Court nominee, and the Senate has the responsibility to give that nominee fair consideration with a timely hearing and a timely vote.

It is deeply troubling to me and the people for whom I work in Wisconsin that the Republican majority would choose not to fulfill their constitutional duty. Before the President has even made a nomination to fill the current vacancy, a number of Senators have announced that they will not perform their constitutional duty. This not only runs contrary to the process that the Framers envisioned in article II, but it runs counter to our Nation's history.

Now, some of my colleagues have claimed that the Senate history supports their historic obstruction. This is simply false. In fact, six Justices have been confirmed in Presidential election years since 1900, including Louis Brandeis, Benjamin Cardozo, and Republican appointee Anthony Kennedy, who was confirmed by a Democratic-controlled Senate during President Ronald Reagan's last year in office.

Recently, one of my colleagues on the other side suggested that the nomination and confirmation process for a Supreme Court Justice—perhaps just this impending Supreme Court nomination—would be nothing more than playing pinata. I would like to point out that when playing pinata, children are typically blindfolded, spun around in circles, and then they take a whack at the pinata with either a bat or stick. It is as if my Republican colleagues have become dizzy by what they are hearing around them—perhaps Donald Trump's divisive rhetoric.

Do they see a Supreme Court nominee as nothing more than something to whack over and over, like a pinata? The violence of the metaphor is problematic. Have they lost faith and allegiance in their constitutional duties?

Today, the American people deserve a full and functioning Supreme Court, not an empty seat on the highest Court in the land. The American people cannot afford partisan obstruction that threatens the integrity of our democracy and the functioning of our constitutional government.

In my home State of Wisconsin, people get it. A recent poll there done by Marquette University showed a majority of the people believe that the Senate should hold hearings and a vote on a nominee this year. A majority of Wisconsinites also said they believe that leaving this seat on our highest Court vacant for more than a year will hurt the U.S. Supreme Court's ability to do its job. They are right, and their message to Washington and the Republican majority is simple: Do your job so the Supreme Court can do its job on behalf of all of the American people. The American people deserve better than a long-term vacancy that could jeopardize the administration of justice across our whole country.

So I call on my colleagues to join together on behalf of the American people to fulfill our constitutional obligation of restoring the U.S. Supreme Court to its full strength.

In the spirit of cooperation, in the spirit of bipartisanship, I call on Senate Republicans to end their partisan obstruction and do their jobs.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

TRAGEDY IN KANSAS AND IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I wish to address the Senate in regard to a terrible tragedy that has occurred in our State. I start with the premise that our immigration system is terribly broken and the consequences of flawed immigration policies exhibit themselves across our society. It is hard to understand why nothing has been done to address certain obviously dangerous vulnerabilities and specific problems that put American lives at risk.

Sanctuary city policies and indifference about prosecution of illegal immigrants arrested for dangerous crimes and the tolerance of bureaucratic red-tape by the administration all contribute to a dangerous degrading of the criminal justice system. The failure to address illegal immigration at all levels of government has been accounted for in lost lives.

Sometimes a government failure is just annoying. Sometimes it is deadly. Decades of broken immigration policy contributed to the situation that led to the murder of four people in Kansas and another in Missouri. The victims are Michael Capps, 41 years old, Jake Waters, 36 years old, Clint Harter, 27 years old, and Austin Harter, 29 years old, all of Kansas City, KS, and Randy Nordman, 49 years old, of New Florence, MO. The man suspected of taking these lives is an illegal immigrant—a

man who has unlawfully entered the United States three times. He has been arrested over and over. He has repeatedly demonstrated that he is a serious threat. Yet, despite these red flags, the system failed, and this man was free and able to commit these barbaric acts.

The extent of the systemic breakdown in this case is sickening. How criminal suspects unlawfully in the country are processed is a failure. The policies are terribly ineffective. In the current system, justice is delayed by bureaucracy or obstructed, in some cases, amazingly, by design. A broken system—some people prefer it that way and work to make it so. Others simply permit it to persist. Regardless, this has resulted in horrific crimes.

Sanctuary city policies and the laws that enable them must be fixed before the unnecessary loss of innocent life happens again. Failure to do so only allows more crimes like these murders and the spree of criminal behavior that preceded them.

Congress needs to act now. The President needs to act now. The Department of Homeland Security needs to act now. Local governments and law enforcement agencies need to act now.

The Senate's attempt to do just that has been stymied, but we must not give up on an effort to secure our Nation and protect Americans from harm. Failure to address these problems will only make the problems worse and will make them more difficult to solve later. Continuing the status quo means empowering career offenders, incentivizing law-evading behavior, impeding the prosecution of crime, and releasing dangerous and habitually unlawful individuals who have no place in our communities.

The victims of crime like last week's horrors in Kansas City have been failed by their communities and by their political leaders. Americans and our communities will continue to pay the price for the failure of our immigration system and the refusal of policymakers to work together to fix it.

Americans and their families will continue to pay—hopefully not again in the loss of life, but how can we guarantee that? We must act quickly. We must act now to correct these immediate problems, improve our Nation's broken immigration policies and laws, and stop the terrible consequences.

The loss of life is a terrible thing, and probably in this circumstance had no reason to happen, would not have happened if jobs had been done.

Kansans, Kansas families, Americans, American families deserve much, much better. These victims and their families—we honor them today, we offer our condolences and provide our sympathies—but these individuals and their families deserved better.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

NOMINATION OF JOHN KING

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I rise to speak on the nomination of

John King to be Secretary of Education.

Dr. King has impressive credentials and an inspiring personal story. I have had the opportunity to meet with him and discuss his leadership and his view of the law.

I shared with Dr. King that in the view of many legal experts and school officials across the country, the Department of Education has been bullying schools to comply with policies that simply do not have the force of law. This coercive use of power, however well intentioned, is wrong and it is unlawful.

Leadership requires making sure that those serving within the Department conduct themselves in full compliance with the law.

I have an obligation to the people of Oklahoma to ensure that the President's nominees adhere to the law. Regrettably, Dr. King has refused to commit to stopping these regulatory abuses if he were confirmed. For that reason, I will oppose his nomination today.

For far too long we have witnessed executive overreach in this administration. From the Clean Power Plan to waters of the United States, Federal departments and agencies have usurped the power to invent law with increasing boldness. The Department of Education overreach is similar in this kind.

Instead of promulgating rules that conflict with congressional intent, the Department of Education is skirting the rulemaking process altogether by issuing guidance documents they call Dear Colleague letters. Guidance documents cannot and do not have the force of law. Guidance documents may only interpret existing obligations found in statute or regulation.

Some agencies complain that the rulemaking process is too long and it requires too much public input, so it is easier just to say that the new rule simply interprets an existing rule, and then skip the compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act that is required for a new rule. It is complete irony that agencies see regulatory compliance as too burdensome, so they impose new regulatory guidance on States, local governments, tribes, and private institutions at a faster pace, and those institutions have no way to fight the rules—only comply.

Let me give an example from the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. They have a great responsibility to promote our shared American values of equal opportunity, ensuring gender equality, and to work with federally funded schools to prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence. As the father of two daughters, I fully support the objectives of Title IX and condemn all forms of sexual discrimination.

But the Office of Civil Rights enforcement authority comes from Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 bill, and those Office of Civil Rights Dear Colleague letters that are

now being put out there supposedly notify schools of their obligations under Title IX.

Two of the Office of Civil Rights Dear Colleague letters significantly expand school liability by prescribing policies required neither by Title IX nor by OCR's regulations. I am particularly concerned with OCR's 2010 Dear Colleague letter on harassment and bullying and a 2011 letter on sexual violence.

These letters respectively prohibit conduct and require procedures not required by law. For example, the 2010 letter says that making sexual jokes or distributing sexually explicit pictures or creating emails or Web sites of a sexual nature can be actionable under Title IX. Well, regardless of what one personally thinks about abhorrent things like what I have just described, the First Amendment protects all forms of speech, and no part of our Federal Government can dictate what is said and not allowed to be said on a university campus. The 2010 letter leaves schools to wonder whether they should police certain speech on their campus or fear a Title IX investigation.

The 2011 letter requires schools to change their Title IX disciplinary procedures to require what is called a preponderance-of-the-evidence standard of proof. This means that the decision-maker is 51 percent sure a student committed an act of sexual assault or sexual violence. But the Office of Civil Rights doesn't require many due process protections for the accused that he or she would enjoy being provided in a court of law.

The Office of Civil Rights said it was merely interpreting the "equitable resolution" standard that is in the law. So it changed, creating a new standard and saying it is just interpreting some equitable standard that is in the law—a standard that no other administration has ever applied.

If these policies had been subjected to notice-and-comment rulemaking, I wouldn't be standing here today. When agencies follow the law, notice and comment allows for public input and leads to better regulatory outcomes.

But universities never got that chance. So on January 7, 2016, I asked the Department of Education a simple question: From where in the text do you derive this new authority? Where is it in the law that you created this new policy? Because the Department of Education can't create a new law; they can simply promulgate rules from existing law. That is a pretty basic question: Where did it come from in the law?

Unfortunately, the Department of Education did not answer my question. They sent me a letter back, but in their response they insisted that they have the authority to issue guidance under Title IX and cited general abilities in the statute. They also cited prior guidance documents, which are also not legal documents. You can't

make a new guidance off of old guidance documents.

So on March 24, 2016, I replied back to them, pointing out that the 2010 and 2011 letters did, in fact, create new policy. In my reply, I also expressed concern over the reliance by the Office of Civil Rights on letters of findings to support their policy requiring the preponderance-of-the-evidence standard. But these letters are not binding on other schools, either. In fact, they show that the Office for Civil Rights looks to and has enforced these policies enumerated only in “Dear Colleague” letters across the country.

Legal scholars at Harvard Law and Penn Law have argued that the Office for Civil Rights’ sexual harassment policy was “inconsistent with the most basic principles we teach.” Title IX was not written and has never been said to imperil these “basic principles,” as the professors pointed out, which include free speech, due process, and adherence to good administrative procedures. To me, this is evidence that the “Dear Colleague” letters changed the application of title IX and its regulatory landscape in fundamental ways. These policy changes should be subject to rulemaking process, not just inventing new guidelines.

Other prominent voices have also stated their concerns with the substance of and the manner in which the guidance documents were issued. Take, for example, the director of the civil liberties-minded Foundation for Individual Rights and Education, known as FIRE, who stated that “OCR has consistently avoided giving real answers to questions about its power to issue regulations outside the bounds of the law. It cannot avoid accountability forever.”

An analysis from Inside Higher Ed, a respected news outlet for the postsecondary education community, stated:

Last week, the Department clarified in a letter . . . that the Dear Colleague letter acts only as a guidance for college and does not “carry the force of law.” But many college presidents and lawyers argue that the Department’s Office for Civil Rights treats the guidance far more than as a series of recommendations. Instead, they say, OCR uses the letter to determine which colleges are in violation of Title IX and to threaten the federal funding of those that don’t follow every suggestion. Some Department officials have recently said there are clear “musts” and clear “shoulds” in the guidance, though colleges say the Office for Civil Rights does not seem to clearly differentiate between the two. Attempts to clarify which parts of the letter should be read as hard regulations and which should be considered recommendations have only led to more confusion and frustration.

That from this well-respected entity. The publication also quotes Terry Hartle of the American Council on Education saying that “the department’s political leadership can say or write whatever they want, but where the rubber meets the road is where the Office for Civil Rights shows up to investigate cases on campus, and in those cases they consistently treat every sin-

gle word of the guidance as an absolute mandate.”

Kent Talbert, a lawyer who served as general counsel at the Department of Education from 2006 until 2009, went on the record to say that the response to my letter that I got back from Dr. King and from the Department of Education “glosses over” concerns regarding whether the Department circumvented notice-and-comment rulemaking.

Hans Bader, another former attorney in the Office for Civil Rights, characterized OCR’s response as a “question-begging rationalization” that did not “address the criticisms . . . made by many lawyers and law professors.” Mr. Bader went on to say that “the 2011 Dear Colleague letter that was the subject of Senator LANKFORD’s questions is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the Education Department imposing new legal rules out of thin air, without codifying them in the Code of Federal Regulations, or complying with the notice-and-comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act.”

Commentator George Will penned an op-ed on the same issue as my letter, and he said that when the Department argues “its ‘guidance’ letters do not have the force of law—it’s a distinction without a difference.”

Last week in my conversations with Dr. King about the Department of Education’s practice of issuing guidance in lieu of rulemaking as required by law, he stated that if a school has a problem, they can challenge the Department in court, basically saying: If the schools have a problem with our guidance, they can sue us.

Were the Office for Civil Rights to take adverse action against a school for failure to comply with the guidance documents and if that school fought back in court, I believe that school would prevail. In fact, the legislative and policy director for FIRE said that institutions “would be on very solid ground in challenging OCR because OCR’s statements and policies clearly skirted the notice-and-comment requirements.” But you tell me what school would have an incentive to accept the existential threat that litigation poses to their university when they file suit against the Office for Civil Rights? They risk reputational harm, legal penalties, and recision of Federal funding, all because the OCR thinks no one would actually sue them. Many schools decide the risk is not worth the reward, and the Department of Education knows it.

While individual companies or entire industries can and often do fight back against regulatory overreach from the Department of Labor or EPA, the Department of Education is in a position to hold Federal funding ransom if universities don’t comply with its policies even when those policies are unlawful abuses of regulatory power. This is unacceptable.

Just because we share an objective of equality and school safety doesn’t

mean we can turn a blind eye to a Federal department running roughshod over the very regulatory process we require. Here the ends certainly do not justify the means, and schools and the very students we want to protect suffer as a result.

I do want to stress that I admire Dr. King’s dedication to bettering our Nation’s schools. All Americans are undoubtedly enriched by contributions made by such conscientious and exceptional educators. I thank him for his previous time of service, which is an impressive record.

Likewise, I appreciate that these guidance documents predate Dr. King’s service at the Department and that he had no role in overseeing their development or issuance, but when asked to reexamine them and the process of how they were created, he protected them instead of acknowledging the problem with the process. That tells me there are more “Dear Colleague” letters coming to our schools, and this agency will continue to make up the rules in a vacuum and threaten Federal funding for those who dare not comply.

As part of my continuing discussions with the Office for Civil Rights, the Department has assured me they will take steps to clarify the interpretive role of guidance, increase transparency, and enhance opportunity for public input. I am encouraged that the Office for Civil Rights has committed to these improvements, and I look forward to a continued discussion on how better guidance practices, both in the Office for Civil Rights and across the entire government, can actually occur. Unfortunately, these proposals don’t answer the questions I have asked Dr. King, nor do they in any way address the fundamental problems with the 2010 or 2011 “Dear Colleague” letters or the Office for Civil Rights’ broader practice of issuing guidance in lieu of rulemaking. Because I have not received a full answer to the questions I asked the Department and because Dr. King does not acknowledge that this overreach is even occurring within the agency he is nominated to lead, I have no choice but to oppose his nomination today.

Time will tell whether this Department of Education is about to take a new direction with new leadership or whether they will continue the same path of coercive overreach they have already been on. This needs to stop. The American people require a voice in the rulemaking process, and I hope this can press on today.

With that, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 90 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask unanimous consent that all time during quorum calls between 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. today be equally divided in the usual form.

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

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

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

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, last Thursday the Democratic candidates for President had a debate. They made several extremely irresponsible statements about immigration policy. I oppose their calls to reward mass illegal immigration with blanket amnesty, which would undermine the rule of law, cost Americans jobs, drive down wages for working Americans, and invite more illegal immigration.

But what must President Obama think? After all, he has attempted to grant amnesty by fiat to over 5 million illegal immigrants, although the courts have blocked most of those amnesties for now. Yet the Senator from Vermont and Hillary Clinton both insisted that the President hadn't gone far enough. They would expand on his actions and go even further. In fact, a debate moderator called President Obama "the deporter in chief," and Hillary Clinton tacitly accepted the characterization, saying she wouldn't deport nearly as many illegal immigrants as President Obama has—which of course isn't a terribly high bar to clear since deportations are down 42 percent since the start of President Obama's second term and last year deportations hit a 10-year low. Still, I can't imagine President Obama is too pleased with his would-be successor.

I also can't imagine a more opportunist and irresponsible position than the one taken by Hillary Clinton. As she panders for votes, she limited deportation priorities to violent criminals and terrorists. Apparently, Secretary Clinton will welcome con artists, identity thieves, and other non-violent criminal illegal immigrants with outstretched arms into our country.

Even more astonishing, she stated unequivocally, "I will not deport children. I would not deport children." As I stated, this is pure opportunism. For instance, I imagine this child shown in this poster would have liked Secretary Clinton's policy to have been in effect during her husband's administration. This is the famous picture of Elian Gonzalez, a 6-year-old Cuban boy who reached our shores despite his mother tragically dying at sea. Elian's U.S.-based family pleaded with the Clinton administration to grant him asylum, as was our common custom for refugees from communism, but President Clinton rejected those pleas, siding with the Castros. Federal agents stormed the private residence and apprehended Elian at gunpoint. Where was Secretary Clinton? I guess she didn't have a no-kids policy back then. But we don't have to guess. The then-First Lady was campaigning for Senate in New York. She opposed congressional action to protect Elian and advocated returning the boy to Cuba—contrary to a decades-long bipartisan consensus that we should grant safe harbor to refugees from totalitarian Communist states.

Yet, the sad story of Elian Gonzalez isn't the most recent or harmful example of her opportunism. Just two summers ago, our country faced a migrant crisis on our southern border. Nearly 140,000 people—about half of them unaccompanied kids—poured across our border. Notably, most did not flee from the Border Patrol or try to avoid capture; on the contrary, they ran to U.S. border agents.

Why would brandnew illegal immigrants, having successfully crossed our border, turn themselves in? The answer is simple: They have been led to believe they would be allowed to stay.

From the multiple administration memos instructing agents not to fully enforce immigration law to President Obama's unlawful Executive amnesties, to the Senate's own amnesty legislation, every signal from Washington said our political class lacked the willpower to secure our borders and enforce our immigration laws in the country's interior.

Some might say these policies and proposals wouldn't have covered the newly arrived immigrants; that they would have faced deportation. Perhaps, but what they signaled was a complete unwillingness to enforce our immigration laws, just as amnesty granted in 1986 invited another generation of illegal immigrants to migrate to our country and wait for the next amnesty.

These policies certainly gave the human traffickers who transported and abused these kids plenty of grounds to tell desperate parents: Send your kid north with me, and he will get a permiso. In the end, they weren't wrong. Nearly 2 years later, only a very tiny minority of unaccompanied children have been deported. In fact, more than 111,000 unaccompanied minors entered the United States illegally from 2011 to 2015, but only 6 percent have

been returned to their home countries. Yes, some may have received a deportation order from a court—usually after failing to appear for a hearing. Yet the Obama administration has made little to no effort to locate them.

Therefore, it is fair to say the human traffickers, the so-called coyotes, weren't wrong, and many Central American parents took an understandable risk. After all, a life in America in the shadows—as advocates for amnesty and open borders call it—may be preferable to poverty and violence back home. While these factors may have been the push factors in the migrant crisis, there can be no doubt that the pull factors of amnesty, deferred action, nonenforcement, economic opportunity, and safety were just as strong, if not stronger.

That is why even the Obama administration tried to address them. President Obama met with leaders of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador to seek their assistance. Vice President BIDEN flew to Guatemala and publicly urged parents not to believe the coyotes' promises of amnesty. The Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson wrote an open letter to Central American parents, and, yes, Hillary Clinton got involved too. Secretary Clinton stated in 2014 that these children "should be sent back as soon as it can be determined who responsible adults in their families are." She insisted that "we have to send a clear message: Just because your child gets across the border, that doesn't mean the child gets to stay."

That was the right position then, and it is the right position now, even if real action didn't back up the Obama administration's words, but that was then, and this is now, in the middle of another flailing Presidential campaign. Secretary Clinton now says she would not deport children under any circumstances, not even those who just arrived or presumably those who arrive in the future.

We have come to expect such opportunism from the "House of Clinton," but even worse is the irresponsibility. Put yourself in the position of a desperate parent in Central America. You live in Third World conditions. Work is scarce. Food and water are a struggle. Power doesn't always come on with the flip of a switch. Gangs control many of the streets. Murder rates are some of the highest in the world. You have every reason to try to escape these conditions or at least get your kid out, but where to go?

You just got your answer. Hillary Clinton, one of the most famous people in the world—one of only six people likely to be the next President of the United States—just broadcast new hope to the world: You can come to the United States.

Of course, it is a peculiar kind of hope. She didn't say go to our Embassy and seek asylum. She certainly didn't say get on an airplane and fly safely to

the United States, nor will she ever take such massively unpopular positions. Indeed, she essentially invited you to take a life-or-death gamble: If you survive the trip, you can stay.

How is this moral? How is it compassionate to create incentives for such reckless behavior? Hillary Clinton just created a full employment opportunity for human traffickers. She helped oversell illicit tickets on this train, The Beast, a network of freight trains aboard which migrants from Central America cross Mexico to the United States.

The Beast has another name—The Death Train. It is called that because many who ride it don't survive or, if they do, they only escape with grievous injuries or after enduring physical and sexual abuse at the hands of criminal gangs. With her irresponsible pandering, Secretary Clinton's words will help contribute to untold suffering, pain, and death among American families.

Her words are equally irresponsible when looked at from the American perspective. Secretary Clinton's promise to deport only violent criminals and no children under any circumstances will badly harm struggling Americans. Decades of mass immigration has contributed to joblessness, stagnant wages, and communities stressed to the breaking point to provide education, housing, emergency services, public safety, and other basic government services.

The coming Clinton wave of illegal immigration will only make it harder to secure our borders, enforce our laws, and get immigration under control and working for Americans who are, after all, the people we are supposed to serve.

The world is full of violence, oppression, corruption, and injustice. We cannot turn a blind eye to this. It often has a way of arriving at our borders and on our shores. Similar to most Americans, my heart breaks when I imagine the plight of those desperate parents in Central America as they look upon their little ones. That is why I strongly support efforts to assist countries such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to develop stronger institutions and improve living conditions there. Many dedicated professionals in the State Department, FBI, DEA, Southern Command, and other Federal agencies are there serving us—to do just that.

At the same time, we cannot solve all the world's ills and our foremost responsibility is to Americans, not foreigners. We can help reduce the push factors in foreign countries driving migrants to our borders, but we are not obligated to accept their citizens into our country. On the contrary, our obligation is to protect and serve Americans. To do so, we must eliminate the pull factors for these migrants here at home.

Like any country, we have a right, indeed, we have a duty to control who comes to our country and allow them

here only if it is in our national interests. America is a nation of immigrants, but we are also a nation of laws. Secretary Clinton has not only displayed contempt for our immigration laws but also encouraged foreigners to break those laws, to their own grave danger. We must say to these foreigners, loudly and clearly: Do not make this dangerous journey. Do not violate our laws. Do not come here illegally. It is the humane thing to do, and it is the right thing to do. Secretary Clinton should be ashamed of herself for doing otherwise.

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

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

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise to discuss the vacancy created by the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Those of us who knew the late Justice well are still mourning the loss of a dear friend, and the Nation is feeling the loss of one of the greatest jurists in its history. We will never find a true replacement for Justice Scalia, only a successor to his legacy. We owe it to the late Justice's extraordinary legacy of service to ensure that we treat confirmation of his successor properly.

My friends in the Democratic minority have settled upon one mantra above all others in addressing this vacancy; that the Senate must "do its job." While I have no doubt this talking point has been poll tested and refined to serve as the most effective political attack possible, the truth is that this point is completely uncontroversial. I have not heard a single one of my Republican colleagues argue that the Senate should not do its job with respect to the Supreme Court vacancy. Where we have a legitimate difference of opinion is how the Senate can best do its job.

Article II, section 2 of the Constitution divides the appointment process into two—two—distinct roles: the power of the President to nominate and the power of the Senate to provide its advice and consent. Despite the wild claims of some of my Democratic friends to the contrary, the Constitution does not define how the Senate is to go about its duty to provide advice and consent. It does not dictate that the Senate must hold confirmation hearings or floor votes on the President's preferred timeline. After all, how could the Constitution provide such instruction if the Judiciary Committee did not come into existence until 27 years after the Senate first convened in 1789? Indeed, the Judiciary Committee only began holding confirmation hearings in the past century,

and nominees only began appearing before the committee regularly in the past 60 years.

In fact, the Constitution prescribes no specific structure or timeline for the confirmation process, and the Constitution's text and structure, as well as longstanding historical practice, confirm that the Senate has the authority to shape the confirmation process how it sees fit. In other words, the Senate's job is to determine the best way to exercise its advice and consent power in each unique situation.

Over the years, the Senate has considered nominations in different ways at different times, depending on the circumstances. Consider these precedents with great bearing on the current circumstances. The Senate has never confirmed a nominee to a Supreme Court vacancy that opened up this late in a term-limited President's time in office. This is only the third vacancy in nearly a century to occur after the American people had already started voting in a Presidential election. In the previous two instances, in 1956 and 1968, the Senate did not confirm the nominee until the following year. The only time the Senate has ever confirmed a nominee to fill a Supreme Court vacancy created after voting began in a Presidential election year was in 1916, and that vacancy only arose when Justice Charles Evans Hughes resigned his seat on the Court to run against incumbent President Woodrow Wilson.

Key Democrats have long expressed strong agreement with the decision to defer the confirmation process in these circumstances. For example, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, the incoming Democratic leader, argued in July 2007—with a year and a half left in President George W. Bush's term and with no Supreme Court seat even vacant—that the Senate "should not confirm any Bush nominee to the Supreme Court except in extraordinary circumstances." Vice President JOE BIDEN argued in 1992, when he was Judiciary Committee chairman, that if a Supreme Court vacancy occurred in that Presidential election year, "the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over."

Past practice and the well documented past positions of key Democrats certainly support the notion that deferring the confirmation process is an option reasonably available to the Senate in certain circumstances. As for its appropriateness in the present situation, one need only consider how the confirmation process would be further poisoned by election-year politics.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee for nearly four decades, I have witnessed the judicial confirmation process become increasingly divisive and sometimes—oftentimes, as a matter of fact—downright nasty. First came the campaigns of character assassination waged against Robert Bork and Clarence Thomas. Then came the

Senate Democrats' unprecedented filibusters of President George W. Bush's lower court nominees. Then came the attempt to deny an up-or-down vote on the nomination of Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court—a move supported by then-Senators Obama, BIDEN, CLINTON, REID, DURBIN, SCHUMER, and LEAHY. Finally came the unilateral use of the nuclear option to blow up the filibuster and pack the DC Circuit Court of Appeals—widely considered the second most powerful court in the Nation—with liberal judges committed to rubberstamping the President's agenda.

Those who were responsible for every single one of these major escalations in the so-called judicial confirmation wars have no credibility to lecture anyone on what a proper confirmation process should look like in this situation. For those of us who have fought against the breakdown of the confirmation process, the prospect of considering a nomination in the middle of what may be the nastiest election of my lifetime could only further damage the long-term prospects of a healthy confirmation process. Deferring the process is in the best interests of the Senate, the judiciary, and the country.

The tenor of the debate since Justice Scalia's passing has only confirmed how right we were to take a stand to defer the process until after the election. For example, a speech I delivered to the Federalist Society on Friday was briefly disrupted by protestors chanting "Do your job," ironically just as I began to explain why our approach to this vacancy is the best way the Senate can indeed do its job. Now, I do not mind protestors speaking their minds, but I don't appreciate it when they try to prevent others from expressing differing views. That a respectful discussion among attorneys was disrupted by professional activists wielding materials from Organizing for Action, a political arm of the White House and the Democratic National Committee, demonstrates what I have been saying all along: Considering a nominee in the midst of a Presidential election campaign would further inject toxic political theater into an already politicized confirmation process.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of an article from POLITICO detailing the extensive political coordination between the White House and the parent organization of these protestors that risks turning what should be serious consideration of a weighty lifetime appointment into an election-year political circus.

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

[From POLITICO, Mar. 13, 2016]

WHITE HOUSE PREPS SUPREME COURT BATTLE PLAN

(By Edward-Isaac Dovere and Josh Gerstein)

As soon as President Barack Obama announces a Supreme Court nominee from his short list—which is now set—the White

House and its allies will unleash a coordinated media and political blitz aimed at weakening GOP resistance to confirming the president's pick.

Administration allies have already started putting a ground game in place. Obama campaign veterans have been contracted in six states—New Hampshire, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, where GOP incumbents are most vulnerable, plus Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley's Iowa.

With Republicans flatly refusing even courtesy meetings with a nominee, let alone confirmation hearings, they're also looking into photo ops with Senate Democrats, and could pursue mock hearings or other events meant to highlight GOP intransigence, according to sources familiar with the planning.

Still, the West Wing is trying to strike a balance between pushing the nominee forward to create pressure and the danger of seeming to politicize the fight or accidentally straying into hypothetical discussions of future court decisions.

Obama is expected to announce a nominee as early as this week. Many believe that the choice will be one of three federal appeals court judges: Sri Srinivasan, Merrick Garland or Paul Watford.

The first calls for outside help went out from the White House as soon as Antonin Scalia's death was confirmed and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) ruled out confirming a successor. That Thursday, senior Obama adviser Valerie Jarrett and White House counsel Neil Eggleston gathered in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building for a larger version of their regular judicial nominations action meeting, with participants including Judy Lichman of the National Partnership for Women & Families, frequent White House collaborator Robert Raben, People for the American Way and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. Tina Tchen, chief of staff to the First Lady, also attended.

In follow-up conference calls and smaller meetings, a plan and strategy took shape, which they agreed would be led by Obama 2012 deputy campaign manager Stephanie Cutter, with White House communications director Anita Dunn leading the media plan, and recently departed legislative affairs director Katie Beirne Fallon taking the lead on the Hill. The following week, leaders of more of the operational groups gathered in Jarrett's office for a brainstorming and coordination meeting, with Eggleston and political director David Simas attending. Among the outside groups that attended: Center for American Progress president Neera Tanden, Americans United for Change president Brad Woodhouse, political consultant Bob Creamer and Patty First from the Raben Group.

The White House is still unsure how to deploy Obama. Some advisers feel like the presidential bully pulpit is the only way to bring enough pressure to have a chance at making Senate Republicans crack. Others have been advising that the more this is about Obama, the worse their chances are, and the more they can focus attention on the nominee, and his or her qualifications, the better they'll do.

Obama's aides haven't made a final decision on the long-term strategy. They're more focused for the moment on finalizing plans for the roll-out, hoping to at least generate some initial buzz around the nominee.

Outside allies are lining up progressive organizations, labor leaders, women's groups and black ministers, to focus attention on the battle, which is likely to drag on for months. Monday morning, for example, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is releasing a letter from law school deans pushing the Senate to act.

"We are building this campaign for the long haul. Our number one goal is that Senate Republicans do their job, follow their Constitutional responsibility and take up the president's nominee and put that person on the court," said one of the people involved in the outside efforts. "But if they want a political fight, we're more than willing to accommodate them. And if they maintain this unprecedented obstruction, they can kiss their majority goodbye."

Senate Democrats have been pitching in too. First up: photos and video of the nominee going to meet with Democratic senators on Capitol Hill, hoping will keep the nominee in the news. The administration and Senate Democrats are also weighing whether to stage mock hearings or other photo ops highlighting the nominees inability to even talk to Republicans—all in the hope of generating embarrassing footage for the GOP.

"Unprecedented Republican obstruction calls for an unconventional response," is how one Senate Democratic leadership aide put it.

Traditionally, Supreme Court nominees go completely silent except for their private meetings with senators and committee hearings. Though White House aides appear ready to break with that tradition, they'll only go so far: the nominee won't be making the rounds of Sunday talk shows, but some outside advisers have pushed for more contained and scripted appearances, like speeches at bar associations or law schools.

But the White House is proceeding carefully, feeling that the politics work best for them if they're able to keep the focus on Republican obstructionism.

"It's going to be largely about the person, so it's up to us to be as serious and dogged about how we present that person to the country," a White House aide said.

Top aides remain optimistic that McConnell will ease his blockade, but right now there's zero indication Republicans plan to back down. With that in mind, the administration is prepared for the fight to become more about ramping up embarrassment for Republicans up and down the ballot going into November, hoping they can help elect a Democratic president and more Democrats to the Senate, who would then fill the seat in January.

Asked aboard Air Force One on Friday whether the White House is prepared to have the nominee do interviews or whether the president will take a more public role, White House press secretary Josh Earnest said, "it's too early to say exactly how this will play out."

Within the White House, the planning is being overseen by Jarrett, Brian Deese, the senior adviser whom Obama tapped to lead the process, and Shailagh Murray, the senior adviser and former newspaper reporter who's specialized in developing unconventional media strategies for this White House. White House principal deputy press secretary Eric Schultz has become the point person for the media approach.

Jarrett's chief of staff, Yohannes Abraham, has been organizing about 125 outside experts, including legal experts, law school deans, former Supreme Court clerks, officials from previous administrations, former elected officials (including dozens of Republicans), civil rights leaders, mayors, union officials, CEOs and environmental leaders.

They've also convened conference calls with leaders broken down by groups. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Latino, African-American, civil rights, small business, state and local elected officials, academics and law school deans, disability advocacy, faith, youth, labor and progressives, women and lawyers.

"The coordinated grassroots effort that has already proven a powerful tool to put

pressure on Republicans will only ramp up," said Amy Brundage, a former deputy communications director at the White House currently helping coordinate communications for the outside effort at Dunn's firm. "That includes events in targeted states with real working Americans pushing Senate Republicans to do their jobs, press events with key Democratic members and groups, and coordinated validator pushes like those with the legal scholars, historians and attorneys general."

So far, the administration doesn't have a set calendar for each day following the submission of the nomination, but they're developing the plan to accommodate variables such as who the nominee is, what that person's biography includes, and what that person's current job allows for. With the short list reportedly limited to sitting federal judges, there may be less room to maneuver. Judges face more restrictions on their activities than a practicing attorney, academic or politician.

"The formal ethics rules applicable to appellate court judges wouldn't apply to a senator," said Indiana University professor Charles Geyh. The standard rules for judicial candidates technically don't apply to Supreme Court nominees, Geyh pointed out. Strategic considerations have led recent nominees to be fairly evasive about their views, but that doesn't preclude trying to keep the spotlight on the nomination.

"I wouldn't hesitate to have cameras at the ready to the extent this person is having doors slammed in his face, using that as a way to embarrass the Republicans, but that's different from having the nominee out there chatting about what he'd do as a judge," Geyh said, adding that most of the reticence nominees have shown in recent years "is all strategic and has nothing to do with ethics."

Democrats have already been talking about holding unofficial hearings on a potential nomination. Whether the nominee himself or herself would attend is an open question, but experts say it would also be within ethical bounds.

"We're entering uncharted waters here. We've never had a situation in which the party in power, in this case the Republicans, were denying even a hearing to the nominee," said Nan Aron of the liberal Alliance for Justice.

If the fight stretches into late summer and the Democratic focus turns to an election-focused campaign, the situation gets dicier. A nominee who's a sitting judge would need to steer clear of events where those arguments are being made, and even a non-judge would be wise to do the same.

Conservatives say they're bracing for an aggressive campaign by the White House and Democrats who'll be looking to keep the Supreme Court fight on the front burner. Already, some groups have been circulating opposition research about several of the potential nominees whose names have been most discussed, hitting Sri Srinivasan, Jane Kelly and Ketanji Jackson.

"This is just going to push the boundaries," said veteran GOP judicial nominations advocate Curt Levey, now with Freedomworks. "They can certainly make the meetings with Democratic senators into a show—more of a show than it normally is."

The White House theory is that if there's enough pressure to get Republicans to cave on a hearing, that will start the ball rolling in a way that'll make winning confirmation a real possibility.

Democrats pounced on Sen. John Cornyn's (R-Texas) promise last week that the Republicans will turn Obama's nominee into a piñata. That raises additional questions about who Obama chooses, since the person will have to endure not just a stranger than

normal process, but likely a very negative one. As Cornyn warned, that could be enough to make some potential picks say no. If this fight goes on long enough and the nominee is a judge who'll likely recuse from pending and future cases, the person could be open to attacks of getting paid for not working—or going back to their day job and appearing to throw in the towel.

Levey said he expects the fight will eventually morph into full-blown election politics. "At some point this is going to turn," Levey said. "It may turn very quickly in terms of the White House giving up whatever little hope they have."

Mr. HATCH. Furthermore, Madam President, the minority leader has turned his daily remarks on the floor into constant diatribes against the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. These diatribes rank among the most vicious and most personal attacks I have heard on the Senate floor in my nearly four decades in this Senate body. Having myself served as chairman of the Judiciary Committee for more than 8 years, I know that the position is no stranger to controversy and political hardball. But the vile and unfair attacks on Senator GRASSLEY's independence and work ethic have gone too far.

I have had the privilege of serving with Senator GRASSLEY for more than 35 years. I know no one more committed to doing his job. Senator GRASSLEY has not missed a vote in a record-setting 27 years—when he was home in Iowa, touring the awful damage of the Great Flood of 1993—and yet still manages to hold townhall meetings in all 99 of his State's counties every year. He sets the gold standard of service in the Senate.

If anyone knows his mind, it is Senator GRASSLEY. Each of us is entitled to our opinions on issues that come before this body, even controversial ones, but I want to condemn in the strongest possible terms the notion that a difference of opinion with Senate Democrats means that Senator GRASSLEY is compromising his own integrity or the independence of the Judiciary Committee he leads. These attacks come very close to impugning his character, and that sort of behavior is beneath the dignity of this body.

The minority leader came to the floor to seize on the comments of the senior Senator from Texas to manufacture what I consider to be another cheap political attack on the Republican majority. In those comments, Senator CORNYN had speculated that the election-year political environment could, unfortunately, turn any Supreme Court nominee into a political piñata. The minority leader's comments are a total mischaracterization of Senator CORNYN's record of fairness toward nominees of both parties and of Senate Republicans' intentions in this situation. After all, the whole point of deferring the nomination and confirmation process is to limit the mistreatment of any nominee, as Senator CORNYN suggested in his remarks. This unfounded accusation is also deeply

ironic, coming from the party that stooped to the character assassination of Robert Bork and Clarence Thomas.

If there is anyone who has been treated like a piñata in this debate, it has been Senator GRASSLEY. Now, CHUCK GRASSLEY is as tough as they come, and I have every confidence that he will weather these attacks. But if these scorched-earth political tactics reflect the length some of the Democratic minority are prepared to go in an election-year confirmation battle, there can be no better illustration of why we should defer this process.

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

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

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, today the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Dr. John King to be the next Secretary of Education. While there is only 1 year left in the Obama Presidency, this is still one of the most important jobs in Washington because the Department of Education has a powerful set of tools available that it can use to stand up for people who are struggling with student loan debt and tools to help make a quality, affordable college education a reality for millions of Americans.

Secretary of Education must be one of the most difficult jobs in Washington because for years there has been some kind of problem at the Department of Education that has made it practically impossible to get the Department to put the interests of students ahead of the interests of private contractors and for-profit colleges that are making the big money off our students.

The Department has powerful tools to make sure that fraudulent colleges aren't sucking down billions of taxpayer dollars of student loans. But for the most part, these tools gather dust on the shelf while shady institutions like Corinthian Colleges spend years gobbling up taxpayer money while they defraud their own students.

The Department has powerful tools to help students when they get ripped off by fraudulent colleges. But for years, it has been like pulling out your own teeth simply to get relief for the victims who got cheated by for-profit colleges like Corinthian.

There are literally dozens of examples of how the Department of Education's trillion-dollar student loan bank has been putting profits for these companies and for-profit colleges ahead of the needs of students. One of the worst has been the bank's approach to overseeing the student loan servicing companies that are paid by the government to collect student loan payments.

Consider the case of Navient, a student loan servicer that got caught red-handed ripping off tens of thousands of

active duty members of the military. Two years ago, the Department of Justice and the FDIC fined the company \$100 million for breaking the law and overcharging our active duty military on their student loans. But the Department of Education didn't take any action against Navient. Instead of following the lead of the Justice Department and using the Justice Department's evidence—no, the Department of Education announced its own separate review of whether soldiers were harmed.

A year later, they released their results, and notwithstanding the fact that Navient was already sending checks to thousands of servicemembers under the DOJ and FDIC agreement, the Department of Education student loan bank concluded that everything was just fine, and the Department's bank had no need to impose any additional fines or restrictions on Navient. In fact, things were so fine that the Department's bank rewarded Navient by renewing a \$100 million contract.

If that sounds stinky to you, it should. The Department's inspector general took a close look at what was going on over at the Department's bank, and 2 weeks ago they released a scathing report on the bank's whitewash. The IG slammed the Department for a report that was a complete and utter mess, loaded with errors, calling for "inconsistent and inadequate actions." The IG concluded that the Department of Education's happy-face press release announcing that everything was fine with the servicer was "unsupported and inaccurate."

When a private company breaks the law and steals from American soldiers who are literally in the field fighting overseas, those companies should be held accountable. The Justice Department held Navient accountable. The FDIC held Navient accountable. But the Department of Education's bank decided it was more important to protect Navient than to watch out for our military students.

Let's not mince words. The Navient fiasco is outrageous, but it is not surprising. At a Senate hearing 2 years ago, I asked James Runcie, who runs the Department of Education's student loan bank, how he could turn around and renew the contract of a company like Navient that had just copped to ripping off American soldiers. His answer, essentially, was that moving borrowers away from Navient would simply be too disruptive. Senator Harkin said at the time that sounded an awful lot like too big to fail. And Senator Harkin was right. So long as that theory remains the operating principle of the Department of Education, the American people can forget about the law because there will be no real limits on how much money big private companies and large fraudulent schools can steal from students and taxpayers.

Dr. King didn't create any of these problems. These problems have grown and festered over a long time, and they

won't be easy to solve. For several weeks now Dr. King and I have talked about these issues, and I believe he understands the magnitude of the task he faces. He has committed in no uncertain terms to a top-down review of the way the student loan program is administered and the way the Department oversees financial institutions. He has announced that he will force all of the major student loan servicers to review their records and make refunds to all members of the military who were illegally ripped off. And he has embraced strong, new proposals to protect borrowers who are taken in by fraudulent colleges so they can get their money back.

These are serious steps in the right direction. For those reasons, I will vote for him today, but let's be clear that this is not the end of the story. Dr. King has an enormous amount of work to do to get the Department's higher education house in order, and the American people will be watching closely for results.

One of the first things that must be done is a total reform of student loan servicing to make sure nothing like the Navient disaster ever, ever happens again. Here are five simple principles that should guide that reform:

First, put students and families first—every time, every decision. The Department exists to serve students, not student loan companies. It is time they acted like it.

Second, punish bad actors. Navient broke the law and cheated soldiers, but the Department bent over backward to protect them. Right now Navient owes the Federal Government \$22 million it stole in another scam, and the Department hasn't even bothered to collect it. The Department needs to show it is willing and able to punish companies that break the rules, and that includes kicking them out of the student loan program if necessary.

Third, change the financial incentives for servicers. Two years ago, the Department renegotiated the servicer contracts and basically ended up paying the companies more money for the same bad outcomes. No more. Our country pours millions of tax dollars into these companies, and it is time to leverage those dollars to make sure the companies are working for students.

Fourth, release more data. The Department of Education adamantly refuses to share basic data about the student loan program with anyone, even other folks within the Department of Education. That means nobody—nobody—can even see how this bank is being run. It is time for some sunshine.

Fifth, take responsibility for aggressive oversight of student loan servicers. The Department needs to act before this problem metastasizes, and when the Department doesn't have the tools to act, it needs to get out of the way and let the CFPB or other Federal agencies do their jobs.

Five simple principles. Everyone in government who is serious about

standing up for the tens of millions of student loan borrowers in this country should embrace them because we shouldn't be running the student loan program to create profits for private companies. We should run it for students.

We are facing a crisis in higher education. Student debt is exploding, crushing our young people and threatening the economy. Opportunity is slipping away from millions of Americans. The time for reform is now—not in the next Presidency, not 5 years from now but now. Reform starts with the Department of Education, and if he is confirmed today, it is my strong hope that Dr. King will make fixing these problems a top priority from his first day on the job to his last day on the job.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, last week the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee voted to advance President Obama's nominee for Secretary of Education, Dr. John King. Tonight the nomination is set to come before the Senate not for a robust debate but for a hasty vote, and by all accounts confirmation is expected.

I rise to oppose the nomination of Dr. King and to urge my colleagues to join me in voting against his confirmation as Secretary of Education. I have studied Dr. King's professional record—most notably, his time in New York's Department of Education. I have reviewed the transcripts of his confirmation hearing. Based on the policies he has supported, the bipartisan opposition he has invited throughout his career, and his uncompromising commitment to the designs of bureaucrats and central planners over the lived experiences of parents and teachers, I believe it would be a grave error for the Senate to confirm Dr. King's nomination at this time.

Indeed, I believe it would be difficult for anyone to support Dr. King's nomination on the basis of his record. The problem is not that Dr. King lacks experience. On paper, you might even think that Secretary of Education is the natural next step in his career. After 3 years as a teacher and a brief stint at managing charter schools, Dr. King has risen through the ranks of the education bureaucracy, climbing from

one political appointment to the next, but do we think that someone who has spent more time in a government agency than in a classroom is best suited to oversee Federal education policy? More to the point, what matters aren't the jobs someone has held but the policies that person has advanced. This is the problem with Dr. King's nomination.

Look closely at his record, especially look closely at the 3½ years he spent as New York's education commissioner, where he forced on an unwilling school system unpopular Common Core curriculum and standards, an inflexible testing regime, and a flawed teacher evaluation system.

All of this proves that Dr. King is the standard bearer of No Child Left Behind—the discredited K–12 regime that has become synonymous with dysfunctional education policy in classrooms and households all across America. This is not just my opinion. It was the opinion of New York's parents, teachers, legislators, school board members, and superintendents. The vast majority of them opposed and protested against Dr. King and the policies he championed while at the helm of the State's education department.

This Congress and President Obama have promised to move Federal education policy in the opposite direction established by No Child Left Behind. Under these circumstances, Dr. King—the embodiment of the failed K–12 status quo—is not the person who should be put in charge of the Department of Education. If confirmed, Dr. King would serve as the head of the Department of Education for 10 months, until January 2017, when the next President is sworn into office. This may sound like an insignificant amount of time for a Cabinet Secretary to serve, but in reality the next 10 months are crucially important to the future of Federal education policy in America.

Just a few months ago, Congress passed and President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA—a bill that reauthorized the law governing Federal K–12 education policy. Now the Department of Education will begin implementing the ESSA, which will set the course of the Department for years to come. So what happens over the next 10 months within the Department of Education will have sweeping, far-reaching consequences for America's schools, teachers, and students—consequences that will affect not just the quality of education students receive as children but the quality of life available to them as adults.

One of the most serious flaws of the ESSA, and one of the primary reasons I voted against the bill, is that it reinforces the same K–12 model that has trapped so many kids in failing schools and confined America's education system to a state of mediocrity for half a century. This is a model that concentrates authority over education decisions in the hands of Federal politicians and bureaucrats instead of parents, teachers, principals, and local school boards.

There is no government official who is granted more discretion or more authority under the ESSA than the Secretary of Education. The ESSA purports to reduce the Federal Government's control over America's classrooms by returning decisionmaking authority to parents, educators, and local officials. For instance, there are several provisions that prohibit the Secretary of Education from controlling State education plans or coercing States into adopting Federal standards and testing regimes, but when you look at the fine print, you see that in most cases these prohibitions against Federal overreach contain no enforcement mechanisms—only vague, aspirational statements encouraging the Secretary to limit his own powers.

So the question is, If confirmed as Secretary of Education, would Dr. King adhere to the spirit of the ESSA and voluntarily return decisionmaking authority to parents, teachers, and local officials? There is little reason to believe he would.

Dr. King's former boss and would-be predecessor, Arne Duncan, certainly had no qualms about violating similar prohibitions against Federal overreach found in No Child Left Behind, nor has he shied away from advertising the fact that ESSA would function in much the same way as No Child Left Behind.

In an interview with POLITICO, Duncan discussed whether the ESSA would, in fact, reduce the Federal Government's control over America's classrooms. He was asked: "How do you respond to the notion that you've had your wings clipped on your way out the door?" This was Duncan's response: "Candidly, our lawyers are much smarter than many of the folks who were working on this bill."

In other words, Congress can write whatever bill it wants, and the administration's lawyers will be able to figure out a way to implement it according to the preferences of the Cabinet Secretaries and their armies of bureaucrats. This is certainly a brazen admission of bureaucratic arrogance by former Secretary Duncan, but it is exactly in line with the way Dr. King approached his job as education commissioner of New York just a few years ago.

Under Dr. King's leadership, New York became one of the first States to implement Common Core standards and testing requirements starting in 2011. Dr. King was one of the only education commissioners in the country to insist on rolling out the tests before teachers had been given adequate time to adapt to the new curriculum imposed by Common Core. To the surprise of no one—except perhaps for Dr. King—the results were a disaster.

The 2013 Common Core tests only widened the achievement gap and sparked the Opt Out movement in New York, which mobilized 65,000 students to opt out of the Common Core tests in 2014 and more than 200,000 students to opt out in 2015. To make matters

worse, around the same time teachers were being forced to test their students on material they hadn't been given time to incorporate into their curriculum, Dr. King implemented a teacher evaluation system that relied heavily on these distorted student test scores. This evaluation system was so unpopular that in 2014 one of New York's teachers unions called for Dr. King's resignation.

What is most troubling about Dr. King's tenure as education commissioner isn't that he centralized decisionmaking authority within the State's education department, imposing one-size-fits-all policies across a diverse school system. Plenty of education commissioners are guilty of the same, if not worse. No, the real problem with Dr. King's record is that he routinely and apparently as a matter of policy ignored the advice and feedback of teachers, parents, principals, and school board members. Even as his centrally planned house of cards was tumbling down around him, Dr. King stayed the course, believing against all evidence that when it comes to running a classroom, bureaucrats and politicians know better than teachers, parents, and local school boards.

When the Senate confirms a Presidential nominee, we are doing more than just approving a personnel matter; we are accepting, to a degree, what that nominee stands for. As we consider this nomination, we must ask ourselves, what kind of policy do the American people want? What kind of policy do America's elementary and secondary students deserve? We know that local control over K–12 and even pre-K education is more effective than Washington, DC's, prescriptive, heavy-handed approach because we have seen it work in communities all across the country. The point isn't that there is a better way to improve America's schools but that there are 50 better ways, thousands of better ways, but Washington is standing in the way, distrustful of any alternative to the top-down education status quo. And under the leadership of Dr. King, Washington's outdated, conformist policies will continue to stand in the way. America's students deserve better than this. The least we can do is to not accept the failed status quo.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting against this nomination.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

MR. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes before the vote, to be followed by Senator MURRAY for as much time as she may require, and then we will have a vote.

MRS. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes following Senator ALEXANDER.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Senator from Utah has given an excellent speech about why it would be a good idea to have a Republican President of the United States, but we don't have one.

The reason we are voting today is because we need a U.S. Education Secretary confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate so that the law to fix No Child Left Behind will be implemented the way Congress wrote it.

In December, at the ceremony where President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act, the new law to fix No Child Left Behind, I urged the President to send a nominee to the Senate to be the Education Secretary to replace Arne Duncan. Without that, we would have gone a whole year without a leader of that Department confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate. I made that recommendation to the President because this is such an important year for our 100,000 public schools and the 50 million students who are in those schools. We need an Education Secretary who is confirmed and accountable to Congress while we are implementing a law that may govern elementary and secondary education for some time. I want to be sure we are working together to implement the law the way Congress wrote it. That law was passed with broad bipartisan support. It passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of 85 to 12. It passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 359 to 64.

We achieved that result because, as *Newsweek* said, No Child Left Behind was a law everybody wanted fixed and fixing it was long overdue. Governors, teachers, superintendents, parents, Republicans, Democrats, and students all wanted No Child Left Behind fixed. Not only was there a consensus about the need to fix the law, there was a consensus about how to fix it, and the consensus was this: Continue the important measures of academic progress of students, disaggregate the results of those tests, report them so everyone can know how schools, teachers, and children are doing, but then restore to States, school districts, classroom teachers, and parents the responsibility for deciding what to do about those tests and about improving student achievement.

This new law is a dramatic change in direction for Federal education policy. In short, it reverses the trend toward what had become a national school board and restores to those closest to children the responsibility for their well-being and academic success.

The Wall Street Journal called the new Every Student Succeeds Act "the largest devolution of federal control of schools from Washington back to the states in a quarter of a century."

I suppose you could say it didn't go far enough, but that would be like standing in Nashville and waiting 7 years to hitchhike to New York City, and when somebody offers you a ride to Philadelphia, you say: I think I will wait another 7 years. I think I would

take the ride and then see if I could get another ride to New York City, and that is what 85 U.S. Senators thought when they voted for this.

There is no group more interested in restoring responsibility to States than the Nation's Governors. The Governors gave our new law the first full endorsement of any piece of legislation since their endorsement of welfare reform 20 years ago in the U.S. Congress.

I believe the law can inaugurate a new era of innovation and student achievement by putting the responsibility for children back in the hands of those closest to them: the parents, classroom teachers, principals, school superintendents, school boards, and States.

The Senate Education Committee, which I chair and on which the Senator from Washington is the senior Democrat, will hold at least six hearings to oversee implementation of the new law. All of those hearings will be bipartisan, as our hearings almost always are. We already held the first hearing on February 23 with representatives of many of the groups who worked together to pass the law, and now they are working together to implement the law. They already formed a coalition made up of the National Governors Association, the School Superintendents Association, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Parent Teacher Association, with the support of the Chief State School Officers.

They sent Dr. King a letter saying:

Although our organizations do not always agree, we are unified in our belief that ESSA is an historic opportunity to make a world-class 21st century education system. And we're dedicated to working together at the national level to facilitate partnership among our members and states and districts to guarantee the success of this new law.

They go on to say:

That new law replaces a top-down accountability and testing regime with an inclusive system based on collaborative state and local innovation. For this vision to become a reality, we must work together to closely honor congressional intent: ESSA is clear. Education decisionmaking now rests with the states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

You may say something different, but you are disagreeing with the Governors, the school superintendents, the NEA, the AFT, the State legislatures, the State boards of education, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Parent Teacher Association.

Our first oversight hearing with Dr. King will be April 12.

Some have objected to this nomination on the grounds that Dr. King was

supportive of common core when he was education commissioner in New York State. I want those who are worried about that to know that this new law has ended what had become, in effect, a Federal common core mandate. More than that, it explicitly prohibits Washington, DC, from mandating or even incentivizing common core or any other specific academic standards. That is in the law. What standards to adopt entirely up to States, local school boards, and classroom teachers.

Here is what Senator ROBERTS of Kansas, who wrote this part of the law, asked Dr. King at our hearing on February 25:

I know that we have differences on Common Core. I don't want to get into that. But it is part of the existing legislation in law. And I want to be absolutely clear, the language says, no officer or an employee of the federal government, including the secretary, shall attempt to influence, condition, incentivize or coerce state adoption of the Common Core state standards or any other academic standards common to a significant number of States or assessments tied to such standards.

Senator ROBERTS continued:

I know that we, again, have differences. But nevertheless, will you give us your commitment that you will respect the intent as well as the explicit binding letter of that prohibition?

Dr. King said: "Absolutely."

That is why we needed a confirmation hearing. That is why we need to have a confirmed Secretary of Education.

In my questions to Dr. King, I said this about my exchanges at an earlier hearing with Dr. Tony Evers, the Wisconsin State superintendent of public instruction, who is also the president of all the chief state school officers. I said to Dr. Evers:

Do you read the new law to say that if Wisconsin wants to have Common Core, which it does, I believe, that it may? If it does not want to have Common Core, that it may not? That if it wants part of Common Core or more than Common Core, it can do that? It simply has to have challenging academic standards that are aligned to the entrance requirements for the public institutions of higher education in the state.

The superintendent said he agreed with that.

In other words, to be blunt, it doesn't really make much difference what Dr. King thinks of common core. Under the law, he doesn't have anything to do with it. He doesn't have anything to do with whether a State adopts it or whether a State chooses not to adopt it.

The new law also ended the practice of granting conditional waivers, through which the U.S. Department of Education has become, in effect, a national school board for more than 80,000 schools in 42 States. Governors have been forced to come to Washington to play "Mother, may I?" in order to put in a plan to evaluate teachers or help a low-performing school, for example. That era is over. It ends the "highly qualified teacher" definition. It ends the teacher evaluation mandate. It

ends the Federal school turnaround models, Federal test-based accountability, and adequate yearly progress. Those decisions—after all the reports are made about how schools, teachers, and children are doing—will be made by those closest to the children. The new law moves decisions about whether schools, teachers, and students are succeeding or failing from Washington, DC, and back to States and communities, where those decisions belong.

In conclusion, please permit me to add a personal note. This day is actually 25 years to the day since I was confirmed as the U.S. Education Secretary. I believe the Senator from Indiana was on the Education Committee at that time. But here is the difference: Under a Democratically controlled Senate, my nomination took 87 days from the day it was announced and 51 days from when the nomination was formally submitted to the Senate. Under a Republican-controlled Senate, Dr. King's nomination has taken 32 days. His nomination was announced and formally submitted on February 11.

Let me conclude the way I started. The reason we are voting today is that we need an Education Secretary confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate so that the law that 85 of us voted for to fix No Child Left Behind is implemented the way we wrote it. This vote is not about whether one of us would have chosen Dr. King to be the Education Secretary. Republicans won't have the privilege of picking an Education Secretary until we elect a Republican President of the United States. What we need is an Education Secretary confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate so that the law to fix No Child Left Behind will be implemented the way we wrote it.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes. I conclude my remarks, but I want to do so with thanks to the Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, who played such a crucial role in passing the law fixing No Child Left Behind.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor as well today to speak in support of Dr. John King's nomination to serve as Secretary of Education.

This is really an important time for students when it comes to early learning. We have seen improvements, but we have much more to do to expand access to high-quality preschool so more of our kids can start school on strong footing.

This is a critical moment as well, as we just heard, for K–12 education as schools and districts and States transition from the broken No Child Left Behind to the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act that the President signed into law late last year.

I hear all the time from students and families who are struggling with the high cost of college and the crushing burden of student debt. With all of these challenges and opportunities, the

Department of Education will need strong leadership, and I am glad President Obama has nominated Dr. John King who is currently serving as Acting Secretary of the Department.

I want to commend Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, chairman of our HELP Committee, for moving forward with Dr. King's nomination in a timely and bipartisan manner in our committee. I also appreciate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL for bringing this nomination to the floor.

Dr. John King has a longstanding commitment to fighting for kids. Through his personal background, he knows firsthand the power that education can have in a student's life. He has enriched students' lives as a classroom teacher and as a principal. He has worked with schools to help close the achievement gap. And he served as the commissioner of education for New York State for 4 years. No one can question his passion for our Nation's young people.

This administration has a little less than a year left in office, but that is still plenty of time to make progress in several key areas, and that progress is more likely with a confirmed Secretary in place at the Department.

In higher education, I, along with my Democratic colleagues, will continue to focus on ways to make college more affordable, reduce the crushing burden of student debt that is weighing on so many families today, and continue working to fight back against the epidemic of campus sexual assaults and violence.

I would also like to see the Department take new steps to help protect students who are pursuing their degrees. As one example, students like those who went to Corinthian Colleges, have the right to seek loan forgiveness if they attended a school that engaged in deceptive practices. I am really pleased the Department has a new proposal to set up a simple way for students to get relief. And all borrowers should receive the highest levels of customer service and protections under the law, particularly our servicemembers and our military families. This is an issue I and others have raised directly with Dr. King during his confirmation and one where we are finally seeing the administration make progress.

The role of Education Secretary has become especially important as the Department begins implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act. I expect the Department to use its full authority under the Every Student Succeeds Act to hold our schools and States accountable, to help reduce the reliance on redundant and unnecessary testing, and to expand access to high-quality preschool.

A good education can be a powerful driving force for success in our country and help more families live out the American dream. That is what makes education such a vital piece of our work to help our economy grow from

the middle out, not from the top down. I hope to partner with Dr. King as Secretary of Education to work toward that shared goal.

I urge all of our colleagues today to support his nomination.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the King nomination?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted "nay."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 36 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Bennet	Hatch	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Peters
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boxer	Hirono	Reid
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Cardin	King	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Cochran	Markey	Udall
Collins	McCaskill	Warren
Coons	McConnell	Whitehouse
Cornyn	Menendez	Wyden
Donnelly	Merkley	
Durbin	Mikulski	

NAYS—40

Ayotte	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Risch
Blunt	Graham	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Sasse
Capito	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Shelby
Corker	Isakson	Sullivan
Cotton	Johnson	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Daines	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—11

Brown	McCain	Sessions
Cruz	Portman	Toomey
Flake	Rubio	Warner
Kirk	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. 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.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I object. Reserving the right to object, I would say to the majority leader that we are about to enter a topic where people have strong opinions, and they should be able to speak what amount they desire and not be limited to 10 minutes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am not sure what the question of the Senator from Oregon is related to. I was simply going to commend the Senator from Louisiana for presiding over the Chamber for 100 hours—not a terribly controversial thing, I don't think.

Mr. MERKLEY. And I certainly don't object to the Senator doing that. But as we go into morning business, there is no need to put a 10-minute limit to accomplish that.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

GOLDEN GAVEL AWARD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to say a word to Senators about our colleague currently in the chair. He has just passed an important milestone. He has now presided over the Senate for 100 hours. We all know what that means. He will be receiving the Golden Gavel, and I look forward to presenting it to him tomorrow.

Presiding over the Senate may not seem the most glamorous job around here to some people, but it is an important one. You learn a lot about procedure, you learn a lot about your colleagues, and because the use of electronic devices is prohibited, you rediscover the lost art of communicating with a pen and a piece of paper. I think

we could all stand to benefit from that kind of practice.

Today's Golden Gavel recipient often dashes off notes for pages to bring to his staff while in the chair, and because today's Golden Gavel recipient is a doctor, it also takes his staff about 3 hours to decipher each of the notes he writes.

Here is the bottom line for our friend from Louisiana. Being in the chair reminds him of all the history in this Chamber. It brings to mind the many important decisions that have been made here over the years, and it gives him perspective.

"Every now and then," Senator CASIDY says, he likes to just "soak up the moment." I hope he will take the opportunity to do so now. He is the first Member of the class of 2014 to earn the Golden Gavel distinction, and all of our colleagues are pleased to acknowledge this accomplishment.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the body the message to accompany S. 764.

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

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 764) entitled "An Act to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes," do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 3450

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 764 with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] moves to concur in the House amendment to S. 764 with an amendment numbered 3450.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment with an amendment to S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, Deb Fischer, Tom Cotton,

Roger F. Wicker, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Pat Roberts, Orrin G. Hatch, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, Jeff Flake, Tim Scott, Cory Gardner, Shelley Moore Capito.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

MOTION TO REFER

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to refer the House message on S. 764 to the Committee on Commerce.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] moves to refer the bill, S. 764, to the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to Sarah Root, a young woman from Iowa who had a very bright future but was taken from this Earth too soon.

Sarah was 21 years old and just graduated from Bellevue University with perfect grades. In the words of her family, "She was full of life and ready to take on the world."

According to a close friend of hers, Sarah was smart, outgoing, and dedicated to her friends and family. She embodied the words that were tattooed on her body: "Live, laugh and love."

The day Sarah graduated, she was struck by a drunk driver. That driver was in the country illegally. The alleged drunk driver was Edwin Mejia, and he had a blood alcohol content of .241, three times the legal limit. The driver was charged with felony motor vehicle homicide and operating a vehicle while intoxicated on February 3. Bail was set at \$50,000, but he was only required to put up 10 percent. So for a mere \$5,000, the drunk driver walked out of jail and into the shadows. As Sarah's father said, after laying his daughter to rest, "The cost of a bond cost less than the funeral."

Those are painful words to hear, but what is more frustrating is that the driver should have never been released. When local law enforcement apparently asked the Federal Government—specifically U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement—to take custody of the person, the Federal Government declined. ICE refused to place a detainer on the driver. An ICE spokesman stated that the agency did not lodge a detainer on the man because

his arrest for felony motor vehicle homicide “did not meet ICE’s enforcement priorities.”

Now the Root family must face the consequences of the Federal Government’s inaction while grappling with their daughter’s death. It is difficult for the family to have closure since the man is nowhere to be found. It is unknown if he is still in the United States or if he has fled to his home country of Honduras, but this is not an isolated incident. It is business as usual in the Obama administration. Because of the administration’s policies and carelessness, Sarah Root became another victim. Once again, this case shows that there is a colossal and systematic breakdown of immigration enforcement thanks to the Obama administration’s flawed policies and lack of commitment to the rule of law.

Unfortunately, a talented young lady whose life was cut short, who didn’t have an opportunity to take on the world, is a story all too common. Under President Obama’s Priority Enforcement Program, a person in the country illegally will only be detained or removed in a few limited circumstances. Some say that nearly 90,000 undocumented immigrants were released in 2015 thanks to this policy.

Secretary Jeh Johnson has claimed that only those who have laid down roots and do not have serious crimes would not be subject to removal. Yet their words don’t match up with their actions. Local law enforcement, such as those in Omaha, NE, have asked the Federal Government to take custody of certain individuals, but the agency in charge refuses. It hides behind their so-called priorities.

The President has a constitutional duty to “take care that the laws be faithfully executed.” The Constitution does not say the President shall make a list of which criminals would be punished or removed and which criminals may go about their lives. The Obama administration may not agree with the laws that Congress passes, but that has no bearing on its responsibility to make sure the laws are faithfully carried out.

The administration claims it is well within its constitutional duties under the doctrine of prosecutorial discretion. However, this administration’s approach of announcing its priorities and only enforcing the laws on individuals who fall under its priorities is both unusual and obviously an abuse of prosecutorial discretion.

This is unusual to prosecutorial discretion because prosecutors do not usually announce their priorities or when they will exercise prosecutorial discretion. A liberal law professor and immigration attorney, Peter Margulies, explained that prosecutors strive “to keep prospective lawbreakers in the dark.” He explains that if prosecutors’ discretion priorities are not kept secret, they “would effectively license the wrongdoing.”

He then went on to give an example in the case of a burglary. He said:

When an admitted burglar is youthful and the burglar’s “take” is relatively modest, judges may not wish to sentence an offender to prison, and may look with favor on a plea bargain that reflects this sentiment. However, it would be difficult to imagine prosecutors soliciting applications from known burglars for a “burglar’s holiday” that would guarantee a specific period of immunity.

In other words, it is as ridiculous to let people contemplating illegally migrating to the United States know they will get a pass under certain conditions as it would be to let people contemplating burglary know they would be let off the hook if they met certain qualifiers.

Consider the drunk driver who killed Sarah Root. What message does this send to people who make a conscious decision to get behind the wheel after drinking? What this case says is that drunk driving—unless convicted—is not a serious enough offense to force removal proceedings. This is moral hazard. Hence, this administration’s Priority Enforcement Program is creating a moral hazard and given license to illegal activities.

Sarah Root is one of many victims in the past few weeks who died at the hands of undocumented immigrants. In Louisville, KY, Chelsea Hogue was put into a coma when Jose Aguilar, an undocumented person, hit her while driving under the influence of alcohol. ICE issued a detainer and did not take custody of Aguilar but released him a day later, again because he had “no prior significant misdemeanor or felony conviction.”

Then there is Esmid Pedraza, who had been transferred to ICE in August of 2013 after serving time for driving under the influence. However, he was let go on bond because of limited detention space. This is what ICE said at that particular time:

Due to limited availability of detention space, ICE prioritizes the use of its immigration detention beds for convicted felons, known gang members, and other individuals whose conviction records indicate they pose a likely threat to public safety.

This is ironic, given that the administration has failed to live up to the mandated detention bed limit that Congress sets every year.

Just a little over 2 years after his drunk driving offense, Pedraza was charged with the murder of his girlfriend Stacey Aguilar. Then on March 8, an individual illegally present in the United States allegedly murdered five people in Kansas and Missouri. The suspect entered the country in 1993, committed a series of crimes, and was removed from the United States in 2004. He attempted to illegally enter again the same month but was given “voluntary return.” However, he returned at some point and continued his criminal ways. The suspect had been arrested and charged with numerous crimes, including communicating a threat with intent to terrorize; battery of a spouse; several driving without a license offenses; a subsequent felony conviction for com-

municating a threat with intent to terrorize, reportedly based on his threat to kill his wife with a rifle, for which he was sentenced to incarceration for 2 years; two arrests for driving under the influence, which produced one conviction; and a conviction for domestic battery.

On at least two occasions, ICE was notified of the suspect but, for various reasons, did not take custody of that person. That was a major failure between the Feds and local law enforcement.

People are illegally entering the country, being removed, entering again, and committing more crimes. Illegal reentries are happening because there are no consequences. That is what happened in Kate Steinle’s death, and that is why we need to move to what is called Kate’s Law. That bill would deter people from illegally reentering by enhancing penalties and establishing new mandatory minimum sentences for certain individuals with previous felony convictions.

The Obama administration cannot continue to turn a blind eye to sanctuary communities and ignore those who have broken our laws by illegally crossing the border time and again.

How many more people have to die? How many more women—like Kate Steinle, Sarah Root, Chelsea Hogue, and Stacey Aguilar—are going to be taken from their families and friends? The parents of these young women are grieving today, yet their stories fall on deaf ears at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Things have to change. The President must rethink his policies and must find a way to ensure that criminal immigrants are taken off the streets. The Obama administration should try enforcing the law, instead of its priorities, for the sake of the American people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from New Jersey.

(The remarks of Mr. MENENDEZ pertaining to the introduction of S. 2675 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. MENENDEZ. I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, my colleague has brought to our attention a very crucial issue. We need to be there for each other. That is what makes America great—when we are there for each other.

(The remarks of Mrs. BOXER pertaining to the introduction of S. 2674 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mrs. BOXER. I yield the floor.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO KIM DINE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the extraordinary work of United States Capitol Police Chief Kim C. Dine, who served with distinction for more than 3 years with the department.

Chief Dine, who has over 40 years of distinguished service in the field of law enforcement, was sworn in as the eighth chief of police of the United States Capitol Police in December 2012. As chief, he commanded a force of nearly 2,000 sworn and civilian personnel who provide comprehensive law enforcement, security, and protective operations services for the U.S. Congress, its staff, and more than 11 million annual visitors. Chief Dine also served as an ex-officio member of the Capitol Police Board.

Chief Dine's outstanding dedication to duty shined during a tenure that included a Presidential inauguration, the historic visit of Pope Francis, hundreds of protests, and four State of the Union addresses, as well as overseeing the department's strategic plan update. Chief Dine also oversaw other important events such as the 2013 Ricin incident, Memorial Day and July Fourth concerts, the annual National Peace Officers Memorial Service, the implementation of a new radio system, and the tragic line-of-duty death of Sergeant Clinton Holtz.

Chief Dine's outstanding policing career began in 1975 at the Metropolitan Police Department, MPD, in Washington, DC, where he spent 27 years, rising through the ranks to an appointment as an assistant chief of police. During his MPD career, Chief Dine worked in many diverse neighborhoods across Washington, DC, as well as serving in a broad range of organizational assignments throughout the agency, gaining expertise in critical aspects of policing and crime reduction strategies. His accomplishments included building community coalitions, honing community policing strategies, developing juvenile crime prevention programs, and initiating use of force training and internal investigations.

During his tenure as MPD's First District commander—an area encompassing Capitol Hill and downtown Washington, DC—homicides declined by 60 percent and community policing flourished. His last assignment as assistant chief included command over internal affairs, force investigation teams, the disciplinary review division, the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, and management of the memorandum of agreement between MPD and the U.S. Department of Justice to institute agencywide reforms.

In July 2002, Dine became the chief of police of the Frederick Police Depart-

ment, FPD, in Maryland, where he served as chief of police for over 10 years. During his tenure, he and the women and men of the FPD focused on strengthening the relationship between the police and the community, building a new strategy of community policing and intelligence-led policing, improving training, producing the agency's first ever strategic plan, acquiring national law enforcement accreditation, achieving flagship status, and aggressively using technology.

By outreach; marshaling and maximization of resources; acquisition and intelligent use of technology; extensive crime analysis; and aggressive acquisition of grants, FPD was able to combat crime more effectively, build bridges with Frederick's minority communities and deaf community, and make major strides in working with the mental health community through effective partnerships to improve services and minimize use of force issues. Through implementation of cohesive and multifaceted approaches, these efforts resulted in a 10-year record of crime reduction, value-added problem solving, enhanced trust, and communication with all constituents that made meaningful strides in maintaining the high quality of life and pride in Frederick—Maryland's second largest city.

Chief Dine holds a bachelor of arts from Washington College in Chestertown, MD, and a master of science from American University in Washington, DC. Chief Dine's graduate study at American University included study abroad at the University of London Imperial College of Science and Technology Institute on Drugs, Crimes, and Justice in England. Chief Dine is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and a member of a number of organizations, including the Police Executive Research Forum, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association. He is married to a former NASA scientist and is the proud father of two daughters.

Congratulations on your retirement from public service, and we wish you the very best in your future.

EFFORTS TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND OPIOID ADDICTION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was disturbed to hear Senator MCCONNELL's remarks on the floor last week questioning my commitment to supporting survivors of human trafficking. I think anyone who follows our efforts to stop this terrible crime knows the ridiculousness of that claim. I was particularly surprised to hear it coming from Senator MCCONNELL who, along with Senator GRASSLEY and other Republicans, voted against reauthorizing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and the Violence Against Women Act—two watershed laws that changed the way this country approaches human trafficking and other violence against women.

I am deeply committed to supporting victims of crime and have been for my entire career. I started out as a prosecutor, and I have never forgotten the terrible crime scenes I saw. Those images serve as a constant reminder of how important it is to do all we can to support survivors and their families. And those efforts must include a commitment to providing real money—not just lip service—to support survivors as they rebuild their lives.

That is why last Congress, as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I led the effort to reauthorize the landmark Trafficking Victims Protection Act. That historic, bipartisan legislation—and the funds it authorized—signaled our country's commitment to ending all forms of human trafficking, both here at home and around the world. I also led the effort to pass the historic Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Act, which included vital updates to help women on college campuses, tribal lands, immigrants, and new protections for those in the LGBT community to ensure that every victim in need gets the lifesaving services they deserve. These impactful laws were enacted 3 years ago, and they are making a real difference in peoples' lives. Senator MCCONNELL may have forgotten about what we did in 2013 to greatly expand protections for victims of violence, but I have not. I will continue fighting for our most vulnerable populations and work across the aisle to make real progress.

I was glad to see the Senate return its attention to the issue of human trafficking this Congress with the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, which I supported. However, the Senate should have also passed my bipartisan Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act, critical legislation to prevent trafficking in the first place. That bill would authorize funding to provide shelter and services for some of our most vulnerable kids, kids who are literally walking prey for traffickers. Unfortunately, Senators MCCONNELL and GRASSLEY opposed that effort. Republicans cannot pretend to stand up for the rights of trafficking victims while leaving these children behind. They had a chance to help and they said no. That is not leadership.

Senator MCCONNELL also suggested that I had somehow ignored the opioid epidemic gripping our Nation and my State of Vermont and let the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act “languish” in the Judiciary Committee. Again, anyone who knows my record is aware of how focused I am on helping ensure that communities are getting the resources they need to respond to this devastating problem. I have been holding Senate Judiciary Committee field hearings on heroin and opioid addiction since 2008. Long before the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, was introduced, I worked to deliver funding—real dollars—for antiheroin task forces

across the country. And when we did first introduce the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act in September 2014, I was an original cosponsor of that legislation and have worked tirelessly to see it enacted.

At the same time, I have worked to change the focus from imposing harsh and arbitrary mandatory minimum sentences on those who abuse drugs to actually providing treatment. I know that bumper sticker slogans and the “war on drugs” are failed approaches.

It is unfortunate that Republicans in the Senate are unwilling to put real money behind CARA to ensure its programs will succeed. Just last week, Senator MCCONNELL led the Republican opposition to Senator SHAHEEN’s amendment that would have provided emergency supplemental appropriations. Ending this crisis is going to cost money, and it is disappointing that Senator MCCONNELL and other Republicans are not willing to dedicate the resources that are so desperately needed by law enforcement and health care providers throughout this county.

Passing one bill in one Congress is not the answer to addressing the very serious problems facing our communities. It takes a sustained commitment. I am proud of my record to support victims of human trafficking and communities struggling to respond to the opioid epidemic. Unfortunately, too often, Republicans have blocked efforts to provide real funding for these priorities. I will not stop working until we are able to end these scourges.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ANNIVERSARY OF ASSOCIATED LOGGING CONTRACTORS, INC., OF IDAHO

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Associated Logging Contractors of Idaho.

The Associated Logging Contractors, Inc., of Idaho, ALC, have an important voice in advocating for policies that support an essential sector of Idaho—the logging and wood hauling industry. Throughout the past 50 years since its organization, the association has worked to serve its purpose of “developing programs that are instrumental in helping members to reduce costs of operation and to craft creative solutions to problems confronting the industry.” ALC represents nearly 400 independent logging contractor businesses from across Idaho.

From Endangered Species Act reform, to boosting rural economies, to addressing forest health and much more, the ALC has been involved in a wide range of discussions central to Idaho. I value the organization’s and its members’ input and involvement in shaping solutions to our natural resources challenges. We have much work ahead, but progress is being made on public lands issues to the benefit of

Idahoans and our economy. Positive developments in job opportunities and more timber identified for harvest for the betterment of forest health are the result of the State and Federal Government working more closely with private landowners and the logging community to make progress toward the removal of salvage timber from last year’s fires.

While challenging, collaboration is working, and ALC members have been instrumental in advancing this effort. The organization has much to be proud of for its efforts in bringing folks together to achieve solutions and working toward their implementation. Collaboration is difficult but indispensable work, as it brings lasting advancements for habitats, recreation, rural economies, and job production. I have greatly valued ALC member’s support of local collaborative efforts.

Congratulations to the members of the Associated General Contractors of Idaho on 50 years of accomplishments. Thank you for your hard work building up our great State and Nation. I wish you all the best for continued success.●

RECOGNIZING CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

• Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am proud to serve as a co-chair of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth. Through this caucus and from my time in the Senate, I have learned about the experiences that many young people have faced when entering the foster care system. I have worked to help improve the system by ensuring that children are cared for and that we do all we can to find them safe, loving, and permanent homes. Children should grow up in families, not foster care.

Today, I want to pay tribute to Casey Family Programs. It is the Nation’s largest operating foundation focused exclusively on child welfare. Casey is operating in Iowa and all the States to provide strategic consultation, technical assistance, data analysis, and independent research and evaluation. It enjoys a unique partnership with the States by asking what jurisdictions hope to achieve that matches the foundation’s mission and working with the State in partnership. Casey Family Programs also provides direct service to children and families in some States, and it is committed to the goal that no child will age out of their care without a caring adult by 2017.

As a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee, I value the research, data, and policy information that Casey Family program shares. They have done so much for States, children, and families since their inception.

This month, Casey Family Programs is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. I want to say congratulations to its board of trustees and leadership for working so hard to reduce the number of youth in foster care. With their help, we are working every day to make sure foster care is a layover, not a destination.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL BROWN

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Michael Brown on his retirement after serving the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, NLTFPD, for over 26 years. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his years of hard work and dedication to creating a safe environment for the communities of Incline Village and Crystal Bay.

Mr. Brown began his career in fire services 37 years ago. In 1986, he joined the NLTFPD as a firefighter and paramedic. Throughout his tenure, he worked diligently, moving up the chain of command, until he left the NLTFPD to serve the Nevada Division of Forestry. He returned to the district in 2003, assuming the role of assistant fire chief. In 2007, Mr. Brown was named fire chief, taking full responsibility for the department and leading his colleagues in fighting fires and providing emergency services. Mr. Brown commanded the department with over 20 years of experience as a paramedic, serving the local communities with unparalleled knowledge. His years of service in responding to all types of emergency and public service situations are invaluable to residents across the Lake Tahoe community. Mr. Brown truly went above and beyond in his role with the NLTFPD.

It is the brave men and women who serve in our local fire departments that help keep our communities safe. These heroes selflessly put their lives on the line every day. I extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Brown for his courageous contributions to the people of Lake Tahoe. His sacrifice and courage earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly put their lives on the line to benefit others.

For the last 50 years, the NLTFPD has provided risk services to residents of Incline Village and Crystal Bay. The department has three stations and provides two staffed ambulances and two reserve ambulances to address needs within the local community. All firefighters serving the NLTFPD are Nevada emergency medical technicians. In addition, the department has over 20 paramedics ready to assist at any time. This department serves as a special resource to the community with the ability to rescue residents in all types of scenarios, including emergencies in snow, water, or in backcountry, in addition to protecting local residents in incidents of fire. In 1982, it also began providing transportation of the sick and injured to various hospitals. This department has shown unwavering dedication to keeping Nevadans of this community safe. We are lucky to have had someone like Mr. Brown leading the way in the department’s efforts.

Mr. Brown has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the NLTFPD. I am both humbled and honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today I ask all of my colleagues to join

me in congratulating Mr. Brown on his retirement, and I give my deepest appreciation for all he has done to make Nevada a safer place. I offer him my best wishes for many successful and fulfilling years to come.

TRIBUTE TO ROSSI RALENKOTTER

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Rossi Ralenkotter for his hard work and dedication to the State of Nevada. I would also like to congratulate him on his induction into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame. Mr. Ralenkotter has gone above and beyond in his role with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, LVCVA, contributing greatly to the touristic success of our great State.

Mr. Ralenkotter earned his bachelor of science in marketing from Arizona State University in 1969 and obtained his master's degree in business administration from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 1971. Prior to working with LVCVA, Mr. Ralenkotter served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force with the 468th Medical Service Flight. No words can adequately thank him for his service and sacrifices in protecting our freedoms.

He began his career with LVCVA more than 40 years ago, starting his lengthy tenure as a research analyst. From there, Mr. Ralenkotter worked diligently, ascending the chain to the very top. He was named the authority's executive vice president and senior vice president of marketing before taking the role of president and CEO in 2004. As president and CEO, Mr. Ralenkotter launched the LVCVA's "What happens here, stays here" branding campaign, one of the most successful in Nevada tourism history.

He also spearheaded the Las Vegas Convention Center District project, further expanding the convention center and increasing Las Vegas's reputation as the leading business destination in the world. He is truly a role model to the local business community, going above and beyond to grow Nevada tourism. As our State continues to flourish as one of the Nation's top destinations, I remain committed to introducing new policies and strengthening existing ones that positively affect Nevada tourism. I am grateful to have allies like Mr. Ralenkotter working toward a similar goal.

Over the past decade, Mr. Ralenkotter has been recognized for his efforts. He was named Co-Brand Marketer of the Year in 2004 by Brandweek Magazine, as one of the 25 Most Influential People in the Meetings Industry by Meeting News in 2005, and as Employer of the Year by the Employee Service Management Association in 2006. He was also recognized by the International Association of Exhibitions and Events with the Pinnacle Award, as well as being inducted into both the U.S. Travel's Hall of Leaders and the Destination Marketing Association International Hall of Fame in

2014. These awards are given to those individuals who have gone to great lengths to grow business and tourism in their communities, and without a doubt, Mr. Ralenkotter's efforts merit each one of these prestigious awards.

For the last 40 years, Mr. Ralenkotter has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to growing Nevada's tourism industry and further establishing its prestige. The State of Nevada is fortunate to have someone of such commitment working towards these goals. Today I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Ralenkotter on his induction into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame, and I wish him well as he continues in his efforts for the Silver State. •

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 6:40 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

H.R. 1755. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

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-4674. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Margin and Capital Requirements for Covered Swap Entities" (RIN3052-AC69) received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4675. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the Livestock, Poultry and

Seed Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Livestock Mandatory Reporting: Revision of Lamb Reporting Requirements" ((RIN0581-AD46) (Docket No. AMS-LPS-15-0071)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4676. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pistachios Grown in California, Arizona, and New Mexico; Increased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-15-0038) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4677. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Domestic Dates Produced or Packed in Riverside County, California; Decreased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-15-0034) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4678. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4679. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Energy, Installations and Environment), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4680. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Energy, Installations and Environment), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4681. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Updated Legal Authority Citations for 15 CFR Chapter VII" (RIN0694-AG84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4682. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 on March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4683. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4684. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the

report of a rule entitled "Determination of Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction for 2016" (Notice 2016-21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4685. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Consistent Basis Reporting Between Estate and Person Acquiring Property From Decedent" ((RIN1545-BM98) (TD 9757)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4686. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modification of Rev. Rul. 2005-3" (Rev. Rul. 2016-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4687. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Utility Allowances Submetering" ((RIN1545-BI91) (TD 9755)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4688. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulations under IRC Section 7430 Relating to Awards of Administrative Costs and Attorneys' Fees" ((RIN1545-BX46) (TD 9756)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4689. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pharmaceutical Science and Clinical Pharmacology Advisory Committee" (Docket No. FDA-2016-N-0001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4690. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-323, "Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools Salary and Benefits Approval Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4691. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Information Required in Notices and Petitions Containing Interchange Commitments" (RIN2140-AB13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4692. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Toys: Determination Regarding Heavy Elements for Unfinished and Untreated Wood" (CPSC Docket No. CPSC-2011-0081) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4693. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the re-

port of a rule entitled "Amendment to Clarify When Component Part Testing Can Be Used and Which Textile Products Have Been Determined Not To Exceed the Allowable Lead Content Limits; Delay of Effective Date and Reopening of Comment Period" (CPSC Docket No. CPSC-2011-0081) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4694. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-324, "Protecting Pregnant Workers Fairness Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4695. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21-325, "Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Temporary Amendment Act of 2016"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 742. A bill to appropriately limit the authority to award bonuses to employees (Rept. No. 114-226).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 1638. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress information on the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation project in the National Capital Region, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-227).

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2055. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2671. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish rules for payment for graduate medical education (GME) costs for hospitals that establish a new medical residency training program after hosting resident rotators for short durations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 2672. A bill to reauthorize the program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department health care providers; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 2673. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act to accelerate the development and

deployment of innovative water technologies; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2674. A bill to authorize the President to provide major disaster assistance for lead contamination of drinking water from public water systems; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2675. A bill to provide for the adjustment of the debts of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2676. A bill to provide for the adjustment of the debts of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KING):

S. Res. 398. A resolution designating March 15, 2016, as "National Speech and Debate Education Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SASSE:

S. Con. Res. 33. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandaeans, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 337

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 337, a bill to improve the Freedom of Information Act.

S. 681

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 681, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 683

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 683, a bill to extend the principle of federalism to State drug policy, provide access to medical marijuana, and enable research into the medicinal properties of marijuana.

S. 804

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII

of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 838

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 838, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish a national usury rate for consumer credit transactions.

S. 1110

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1110, a bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance, and for other purposes.

S. 1378

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1378, a bill to strengthen employee cost savings suggestions programs within the Federal Government.

S. 1392

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1392, a bill to require certain practitioners authorized to prescribe controlled substances to complete continuing education.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1975

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1975, a bill to establish the Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

S. 2042

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2042, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to strengthen protections for employees wishing to advocate for improved wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment and to provide for stronger remedies for interference with these rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the

Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2289

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 2289, a bill to modernize and improve the Family Unification Program, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 378

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 378, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2674. A bill to authorize the President to provide major disaster assistance for lead contamination of drinking water from public water systems; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I rise to address the crisis of lead contamination in drinking water that we are seeing all across this Nation. It is time for us to come together and solve these problems. We have all been outraged by the crisis in Flint, where we know children and families are being poisoned by lead in their drinking water.

My colleagues from Michigan, Senators STABENOW and PETERS, have an excellent bipartisan bill—which Senator INHOFE and I helped to negotiate—that would provide emergency relief to address this crisis. The people of Flint need this relief now. So I call on any of those holding up this bill to get out of the way and let this legislation pass immediately. The crisis in Flint has also brought attention to the broader issue of lead in drinking water in communities throughout our Nation.

I want to read to you some headlines from just the last few weeks. Here is one from the Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, MS: “Pregnant women, kids cautioned over Jackson water, lead.” That is February 25, 2016.

From Newsweek: “With lead in the water, could Sebring, Ohio, become the next Flint?” That is January, 27, 2016.

From the Associated Press: “Elevated Lead Levels Found in Newark Schools’ Drinking Water.”

In Charlotte, the Charlotte Observer: “Lead in water not confined to Flint.” That is January 30, 2016.

Whether it is Flint, MI; Newark, NJ; Jackson, MS; or Durham, NC—or shall I name some places that are going to hit us—the American people have a right to expect clean, safe drinking water when they turn on their faucets.

It is clear that this is a national crisis that demands a national solution going forward. So that is why today I have introduced new legislation, the Lead in Drinking Water Disaster Act. We are doing this because, should there be more Flints, we want to have a better way to move forward.

Currently, the President can declare a major disaster for catastrophes such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, droughts, fires, floods, and explosions. Now, sometimes those fires, floods, and explosions are manmade and, yet, we are able to act through FEMA, or the Federal Emergency Management Agency. But lead in drinking water is not on the list of major disasters covered under FEMA’s rules.

It is critical that future Presidents do not have their hands tied because the definition of a major disaster does not include lead in drinking water. My bill ensures that a lead-contamination crisis would be considered a disaster, which it clearly is.

Take a look at the color of the water coming out of the fountains here—the faucets. Nobody could face this in their homes. You would get your kids out of there so fast. Current law doesn’t think this is a disaster. So I think this simple way I have of moving forward should be attractive to colleagues. I hope they will sign on to this very simple bill.

The way it would work is that the Governor in any State that is hit by this would ask the President for a major disaster declaration. So for all of my colleagues who feel we should process these things through the State, that is exactly what happens in my bill. If the President agrees, FEMA would provide immediate assistance to protect families from lead in the water.

What we do in this legislation is we name several agencies who would help create the plan to address the emergency. It would be, in addition to FEMA, Health and Human Services, the EPA, and the Army Corps of Engineers. They would work together to create a plan to resolve the crisis.

We can see what is happening to the kids in Flint. Instead of doing their afterschool activities—look how sweet they are—they are carrying bottles of water throughout their community.

Look, there is no safe level of lead for children. The effects of exposure are generally irreversible. Lead harms the developing brains and nervous systems of children and babies. It can cause miscarriage, stillbirths, and infertility in both men and women. People with prolonged exposure to lead may be at risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and kidney disease.

What is the extent of this problem? Millions of homes across America receive water from pipes that date back to an era before scientists knew of the harm caused by lead exposure. While we take steps toward investing in modernizing our water infrastructure, which I hope we will do as we write a new Water Resources Development Act—Senator INHOFE and I are very hard at work in doing just that—we also have to step in and help communities that are in crisis right now.

I want to conclude with this. Again, take a look at the drinking water coming out of the tap. Would anyone in the Senate stand still for a minute if their children or grandchildren were in a situation where this was the drinking water, this was the bathing water? We know there is no way we would ever allow that to happen.

No American should ever have to drink water that puts their health and the health of their children at risk. I hope we take action by passing the emergency legislation by the Michigan Senators this week. The children and families of Flint should not have to wait one more day.

After we pass that measure, which addresses itself just to Flint, MI, I hope we will take up my legislation to help future Presidents address this public health threat, which is going to pop up all over this great Nation of ours. We must be prepared. We cannot tie the hands of this President or any future President.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2675. A bill to provide for the adjustment of the debts of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to be a voice for the 3.5 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico, the 200,000 Puerto Ricans who have served in our Armed Forces in every conflict since World War I, and the 20,000 who currently wear the uniform and put their lives on the line for our country.

I rise to introduce a comprehensive stability and recovery package that restores fairness, ensures accountability, and gives Puerto Rico the tools it needs to dig itself out of this hole. And I rise to implore this Congress to act before it is too late.

Let me thank Senators SCHUMER, BROWN, WARREN, CANTWELL, BLUMENTHAL, and BOOKER for supporting these efforts and working so hard on behalf of the people of Puerto Rico. I also want to thank Congressman PIERLUISI, who coauthored the tax sections of this bill along with parts of the healthcare titles.

Finally, I want to thank Governor Padilla for his incredible leadership on the island and for strongly endorsing our legislation. The people of Puerto

Rico are fortunate to have a Governor who cares deeply about their lives and is so dedicated to putting them first and above politics.

Let me put it this bluntly: Puerto Rico is on the brink of default and staring into the abyss. For the better part of the past year, the government has been compelled to take drastic and unprecedented actions just to avoid a total default of the central government. They have closed schools and hospitals, they have laid off police officers and firefighters, and they have raised taxes on businesses and individuals. But all the spending cuts and tax hikes in the world will not make a dent in this crisis unless Puerto Rico has the ability to restructure its debts. That is because servicing the government's \$72 billion debt is swallowing a massive 36 percent of the island's revenue. That is 36 cents of every dollar the government takes in going not to roads or bridges and schools but to bondholders instead. This percentage is six times the U.S. State average and simply unsustainable by any measure.

In fact, despite all we hear about Puerto Rico's significant annual budget deficits, the island would actually be running a surplus—a surplus—if it didn't have to make debt payments. Let me repeat that: It would have a surplus.

These debt service payments act like an albatross and handcuff the people of Puerto Rico, preventing them from investing in their economy. Fewer resources for education, infrastructure, and essential services cause a death spiral as talented workers opt to leave the island, businesses are shuttered, and revenue drops even further. That is why the first and most important step we must take is to give Puerto Rico the ability to restructure its debt in an orderly fashion—a right that they had at one time and that was surreptitiously stripped out. There is no legislative history as to why it was stripped out, but they had this right. This is not novel. Our legislation would in essence do just that, providing a fair and reasonable way for Puerto Rico to restructure all of its debts while avoiding a costly race to the courthouse that would result in years—years—of costly litigation. But before Puerto Rico can even access this authority, it needs to affirmatively opt in and accept the establishment of an independent fiscal stability and reform board and create a chief financial officer.

This both ensures that any restructuring plan is based on objective and independent analysis of the island's situation and provides assurances to creditors that future governments will adhere to a prudent long-term fiscal plan, while affirming and respecting Puerto Rico's sovereignty.

Once Puerto Rico opts in, it receives an automatic 12-month stay to give government officials the necessary breathing room to organize their finances and develop a sustainable 5-year

fiscal plan upon which annual budgets and their restructuring proposal will be based.

Once the Governor submits a restructuring proposal, a judge selected by the First Circuit Court of Appeals would have to confirm that it complies with the fiscal plan, protects the rights of pensioners, and, if feasible, does not unduly impair general obligation bonds.

Our process follows precedent by giving creditors a voice and the ability to object in court, and it ultimately gives an independent judge the authority to ensure that any plan is fair and reasonable. In order to ensure the long-term fiscal plan is followed—not just now, but in the future—our legislation gives the independent board the power to review annual budgets and future debt issuances and to exercise strong oversight and transparency powers.

If future budgets do not comply with the fiscal plan, the board has the authority to issue a vote of no confidence, which will send a strong and unequivocal message to the legislature, to capital markets, and to the Puerto Rican people that the proposed path is unsustainable, which, in turn, will provide much needed transparency and accountability to the budgeting process.

At the same time, we are careful to affirm the fundamental pillars of democracy by making the board of, by, and for the people of Puerto Rico. The board will consist of nine members chosen by the Governor of Puerto Rico, its legislature, both parties, the Supreme Court, and the President of the United States. At least six of the board members must be full-time residents of Puerto Rico, at least six must have knowledge of its history, culture, and socioeconomics, and all members—all members—must have financial and management expertise.

This structure strikes the proper balance by providing strong and independent oversight and accountability while still respecting the sovereignty and democratic rights of the people of Puerto Rico.

It is not a bailout—far from it, in fact. This proposal wouldn't cost the U.S. Treasury a penny—not a dime—and, because it is limited to the territories, wouldn't have a contagion effect on the broader municipal market.

As I have said before, giving Puerto Rico the flexibility to restructure its debt is the top priority and a prerequisite for any legitimate recovery plan. But it is also clear that the lack of health care funding parity is adding pressure to the overall financial situation as the island's health care system accounts for 20 percent of the island's economy, and it is responsible for a third of its overall debt burden.

Currently, Puerto Rico's Medicaid Program, rather than being reimbursed for necessary costs, is capped. Not only is it capped, it is set to hit a funding cliff as soon as mid-2017. When this happens, the island will instead receive

funding to cover only a very small portion of its Medicaid costs, a burden no State could handle.

The second piece of our legislation fixes this by moving Puerto Rico toward a Medicaid system that provides stable funding for the long term. Additionally, there are several policies in Medicare that treat the island differently from the rest of the Nation, leaving providers and seniors to face unfair penalties and low reimbursements.

This bill eliminates many of these discrepancies to more accurately align Medicare policies in Puerto Rico with the rest of the country. As citizens of the United States—and I emphasize that because sometimes Members of Congress have asked me whether they need an American passport to go to Puerto Rico. I thought they were joking, but they were serious. As citizens of the United States, it is only fair that Puerto Ricans be afforded the same access to care, coverage, and health benefits as everyone else.

Finally, our legislation would incentivize Puerto Rican workers to enter the formal economy and give families the help they need to raise their children by providing parity to the island for the earned-income tax credit and child tax credit. Praised by both Republicans and Democrats as one of the most effective tools to combat poverty and encourage workers to enter the labor market, the earned-income tax credit is currently unavailable to the people of Puerto Rico. However, as American citizens, all it takes for a resident of Puerto Rico to become eligible for a credit is a short plane ride to Miami.

This is just another reason why so many Puerto Ricans have fled the island and taken up residence on the mainland. It makes no sense to prohibit American citizens living in Puerto Rico from taking advantage of this important credit, especially with such a stubbornly lower labor participation rate.

Our legislation corrects this inequity, providing equal treatment for all American citizens, regardless of whether they reside in Puerto Rico or in the States.

I shouldn't need to remind this body that from the infancy of our Nation, the people of Puerto Rico have been there for us and with us, and now we need to be there for them. Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States in 1898 after the Spanish-American War. Less than two decades later, in 1917, Congress passed the Jones-Shafroth Act, granting American citizenship to the residents of the island. But even long before they were granted U.S. citizenship, Puerto Ricans have had a long and profound history of fighting on the side of America.

As far back as 1777, Puerto Rican ports were used by U.S. ships, enabling them to run British blockades and keep commerce flowing, which was so crucial to the war effort. It was Puerto

Rican soldiers who took up arms in the U.S. Civil War, defending this Nation's Capital, Washington, DC, from attack, and they fought in the Battle of Fredericksburg.

In World War I, almost 20,000 Puerto Ricans were drafted into the U.S. Armed Forces. Let's not forget about the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers, the segregated military unit composed almost entirely of soldiers from Puerto Rico, who played a crucial and prominent role in World War I, World War II, and the Korean war.

I am proud to say that I worked with Senator BLUMENTHAL and others to make sure that the heroic Borinqueneers—the only Active-Duty segregated Latino military unit in the history of the United States and the last segregated unit to be deactivated—received well deserved and long overdue national recognition when we passed a bill awarding these courageous patriots with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions to the United States.

While some might be tempted to point their finger at our brothers and sisters on the island and fault Puerto Rico for carrying more than \$70 billion in debt, I challenge my Senate colleagues to work with us on finding solutions because this problem isn't going away.

Mark my words. If we don't act now, this crisis will explode into a full-blown humanitarian catastrophe, not in a matter of decades or even years but in months. In just a couple of months, they have a major payment they do not have the wherewithal to make.

We may think we will kick the ball down the road. But, no, that human catastrophe is going take place in months, and we will be right back here next year with the same set of problems, only far, far worse.

Delaying action is akin to letting an infection reach the bloodstream before seeking treatment. The longer you wait, the more painful and challenging the treatment is. Puerto Rico isn't asking us to pull them out of this, just to give them the wherewithal to help them help themselves be able to achieve the goal.

Let's not stand aside and do nothing while the island burns. Let's not turn our backs on our friends and fellow citizens when they need us the most. Let's instead come together as a nation and support our fellow citizens like we always do when things get tough. The people of Puerto Rico have always been there for us and with us. Let's make sure that we are there for them.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 398—DESIGNATING MARCH 15, 2016, AS “NATIONAL SPEECH AND DEBATE EDUCATION DAY”

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KING) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 398

Whereas it is essential for youth to learn and practice the art of communicating with and without technology;

Whereas speech and debate education offers students myriad forms of public speaking through which students may develop talent and exercise unique voice and character;

Whereas speech and debate education gives students the 21st-century skills of communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration;

Whereas critical analysis and effective communication allow important ideas, texts, and philosophies the opportunity to flourish;

Whereas personal, professional, and civic interactions are enhanced by the ability of the participants in those interactions to listen, concur, question, and dissent with reason and compassion;

Whereas students who participate in speech and debate have chosen a challenging activity that requires regular practice, dedication, and hard work;

Whereas teachers and coaches of speech and debate devote in-school, afterschool, and weekend hours to equip students with life-changing skills and opportunities;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the lifelong impact of providing people of the United States with the confidence and preparation to both discern and share views;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day acknowledges that most achievements, celebrations, commemorations, and pivotal moments in modern history begin, end, or are crystallized with public address;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day recognizes that learning to research, construct, and present an argument is integral to personal advocacy, social movements, and the making of public policy;

Whereas the National Speech & Debate Association, in conjunction with national and local partners, honors and celebrates the importance of speech and debate through National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the importance of speech and debate education and the integration of speech and debate education across grade levels and disciplines: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 15, 2016, as “National Speech and Debate Education Day”;

(2) strongly affirms the purposes of National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

(3) encourages educational institutions, businesses, community and civic associations, and all people of the United States to celebrate and promote National Speech and Debate Education Day.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 33—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THOSE WHO COMMIT OR SUPPORT ATROCITIES AGAINST CHRISTIANS AND OTHER ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES, INCLUDING YEZIDIS, TURKMEN, SABEA-MANDEANS, KAKA'E, AND KURDS, AND WHO TARGET THEM SPECIFICALLY FOR ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS REASONS, ARE COMMITTING, AND ARE HEREBY DECLARED TO BE COMMITTING, "WAR CRIMES", "CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY", AND "GENOCIDE"

Mr. SASSE submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 33

Whereas those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, intend to exterminate or to force the migration or subjugation of anyone who does not share their views concerning religion;

Whereas Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for millennia;

Whereas Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities have been murdered, subjugated, forced to emigrate, and suffered grievous bodily and psychological harm, including sexual enslavement and abuse, inflicted in a deliberate and calculated manner in violation of the laws of their respective nations, the laws of war, laws and treaties forbidding crimes against humanity, and the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris December 9, 1948 (in this concurrent resolution referred to as the "Convention");

Whereas these atrocities are undertaken with the specific intent to bring about the eradication and displacement of their communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage in violation of local laws, the laws of war, laws and treaties that punish crimes against humanity, and the Convention;

Whereas local, national, and international laws and treaties forbidding "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" and the Convention condemn murder, massacre, forced migration, extrajudicial punishment, kidnapping, slavery, human trafficking, torture, rape, and persecution of individuals because of their religion and shall be punished, whether committed by "constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals" as provided by local laws, international laws and agreements, and the Convention;

Whereas Article I of the Convention and international and local laws confirm that genocide and crimes against humanity, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, are crimes that government authorities are obligated to prevent and to punish;

Whereas Article II of the Convention declares, "In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental

harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

Whereas Article III of the Convention affirms, "The following acts shall be punishable: (a) Genocide; (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide; (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide; (d) Attempt to commit genocide; (e) Complicity in genocide."

Whereas, on July 10, 2015, Pope Francis, Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, declared that Middle Eastern Christians are facing genocide, a reality that must be "denounced" and that "[i]n this third world war, waged piecemeal, which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide—and I stress the word genocide—is taking place, and it must end";

Whereas a March 13, 2015, report of the United Nations Committee on Human Rights prepared at the request of the Government of Iraq stated that "[e]thnic and religious groups targeted by ISIL include Yezidis, Christians, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, Kurds and Shi'a" and that "[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of the incidents [in Iraq in 2014–2015] . . . may constitute genocide"; and

Whereas attacks on Yezidis included the mass killing of men and boys and enslavement and forcible transfer of women and children: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That—

(1) the atrocities committed against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities targeted specifically for religious reasons are, and are hereby declared to be, "crimes against humanity", and "genocide";

(2) each of the Contracting Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris December 9, 1948, and other international agreements forbidding war crimes and crimes against humanity, particularly the governments of countries and their nationals who are in any way supporting these crimes, are reminded of their legal obligations under the Convention and these international agreements;

(3) every government and multinational body should call the atrocities being committed in the name of religion by their rightful names: "crimes against humanity", "war crimes", and "genocide";

(4) the United Nations and the United Nations Secretary-General are called upon to assert leadership by calling the atrocities being committed in these places by their rightful names: "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide";

(5) the member states of the United Nations, with an urgent appeal to the Arab States that wish to uphold religious freedom, tolerance, and justice—

(A) should join in this concurrent resolution;

(B) should collaborate on measures to prevent further war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide; and

(C) should collaborate on the establishment and operation of domestic, regional and international tribunals to punish those responsible for the ongoing crimes;

(6) the governments of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, and other countries are commended for having undertaken to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria ("ISIS" or "Da'esh") and other extremists until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and Syria; and

(7) all those who force the migration of religious communities from their ancestral homelands, where they have lived and practiced their faith in safety and stability for hundreds of years—including specifically in the Nineveh Plain, a historic heartland of Christianity in Iraq and Mount Sinjar, the historic home of the Yezidis—should be tracked, sanctioned, arrested, prosecuted, and punished in accordance with the laws of the place where their crimes were committed and under applicable international criminal statutes and conventions.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3450. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3450. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NATIONAL VOLUNTARY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"Subtitle E—National Voluntary Bioengineered Food Labeling Standard

"SEC. 291. DEFINITIONS.

"In this subtitle:

"(1) BIOENGINEERING.—The term 'bioengineering', and any similar term, as determined by the Secretary, with respect to a food, refers to a food—

"(A) that contains genetic material that has been modified through in vitro recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) techniques; and

"(B) for which the modification could not otherwise be obtained through conventional breeding or found in nature.

"(2) FOOD.—The term 'food' has the meaning given the term in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

"(3) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

"SEC. 292. APPLICABILITY.

"This subtitle shall apply to any claim in the labeling of food that indicates, directly or indirectly, that the food is a bioengineered food or bioengineering was used in the development or production of the food, including a claim that a food is or contains an ingredient that was developed or produced using bioengineering.

"SEC. 293. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL VOLUNTARY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARD.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, the Secretary shall—

"(1) establish a national voluntary bioengineered food labeling standard with respect to—

"(A) any bioengineered food; and

"(B) any food that may be bioengineered or may have been produced or developed using bioengineering; and

“(2) establish such requirements and procedures as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the standard.

“(b) REGULATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A food may be labeled as bioengineered only in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary in accordance with this subtitle.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A regulation promulgated by the Secretary in carrying out this subtitle shall—

“(A) prohibit any express or implied claim that a food is or is not safer or of higher quality solely based on whether the food is or is not—

“(i) bioengineered; or

“(ii) produced or developed with the use of bioengineering;

“(B) determine the amounts of a bioengineered substance that may be present in food, as appropriate, in order for the food to be labeled as a bioengineered food;

“(C) establish a process for requesting and granting a determination by the Secretary regarding other factors and conditions under which a food may be labeled as a bioengineered food; and

“(D) require that, if a food is voluntarily labeled under this section through means of scannable images or codes or other similar technologies—

“(i) the label clearly indicates to consumers that more information is available about the ingredients of the food; and

“(ii) the scannable image, code, or similar technology provides direct access to information regarding whether the food is bioengineered or whether bioengineering was used in the development or production of the food.

“(c) STATE FOOD LABELING STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding section 295, no State or political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling or disclosure of whether a food is bioengineered or was developed or produced using bioengineering for a food that is the subject of the bioengineered food labeling standard under this section that is not identical to that voluntary standard.

“(d) CONSISTENCY WITH CERTAIN LAWS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall establish consistency between—

“(1) the national voluntary bioengineered food labeling standard established under this section; and

“(2) the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.).

“SEC. 294. RULEMAKING ON SUBSTANTIAL PARTICIPATION.

“(a) DEFINITION OF LABELED FOOD.—In this section, the term ‘labeled food’ means food that bears, or to which is attached, any written, printed, or graphic matter, including on the immediate container or on the package of the food.

“(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, the Secretary shall promulgate regulations defining the circumstances that constitute substantial participation by labeled foods with voluntary disclosures of whether a food is, is not, or may be bioengineered or whether bioengineering was, was not, or may have been used in the development or production of the food.

“(c) CONSIDERATION.—In promulgating regulations under subsection (b), the Secretary shall consider—

“(1) the percentage of the labeled foods consumed by consumers that disclose whether the food is, is not, or may be bioengineered or whether bioengineering was, was not, or may have been used in the development or production of the food; and

“(2) the extent to which there is clear indication in a usual and customary form that

information is available for the most frequently consumed labeled foods or direct access to disclosures for the most frequently consumed labeled foods, including through means that are clear and direct other than the label or labeling, such as responses to consumer inquiries through call centers, the Internet, websites, social media, scannable images or codes or other similar technologies that would allow consumers to access the information, or any other means the Secretary considers appropriate for disclosing the bioengineered content of food.

“(d) REQUIREMENT.—In promulgating regulations under subsection (b), the Secretary shall define the term ‘most frequently consumed labeled foods’.

“SEC. 294A. NATIONAL MANDATORY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

“(a) REQUIREMENT FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF MANDATORY STANDARD.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The mandatory standard under subsection (b) shall be established only if the Secretary determines there is not substantial participation as determined in accordance with section 294(b).

“(2) DEADLINE.—The Secretary shall make the determination as described in paragraph (1) not earlier than the date that is 2 years after the date on which the Secretary has promulgated regulations under each of sections 293 and 294(b).

“(3) INITIATION.—If the Secretary determines that there is not at least 70 percent substantial participation as determined in accordance with section 294(b), the Secretary shall promulgate regulations to establish a mandatory standard in accordance with this section.

“(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF MANDATORY STANDARD.—If the Secretary determines that there is not substantial participation as described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

“(1) establish a national mandatory bioengineered food labeling standard with respect to—

“(A) bioengineered food; and

“(B) food that may be bioengineered or may have been produced or developed using bioengineering; and

“(2) establish such requirements and procedures as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the standard.

“(c) REGULATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary establishes a mandatory standard under subsection (b), a food may be labeled as bioengineered only in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A regulation promulgated by the Secretary in carrying out this section shall—

“(A) prohibit any express or implied claim that a food is or is not safer or of higher quality solely based on whether the food is or is not—

“(i) bioengineered; or

“(ii) produced or developed with the use of bioengineering;

“(B) determine the amounts of a bioengineered substance that may be present in food, as appropriate, in order for the food to be labeled as a bioengineered food;

“(C) establish a process for requesting and granting a determination by the Secretary regarding other factors and conditions under which a food may be labeled as a bioengineered food;

“(D) exclude food served in a restaurant or similar establishment; and

“(E) require an appropriate person (as determined by the Secretary) to disclose food that is subject to the mandatory standard either through—

“(i) a statement made on the food label or labeling; or

“(ii) means other than the label or labeling, including responses to consumer inquiries through call centers, the Internet, websites, social media, scannable images or codes or other similar technologies that would allow consumers to access the information, or any other means the Secretary considers appropriate for disclosing the bioengineered content of food.

“(3) IMPLEMENTATION.—The implementation date for regulations promulgated in accordance with this section shall be not earlier than 2 years after the later of—

“(A) the date on which the Secretary promulgates the final regulations under this section; or

“(B) the date on which the Secretary makes a determination under subsection (a)(1).

“(d) STATE FOOD LABELING STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding section 295, no State or political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling or disclosure of whether a food is bioengineered or was developed or produced using bioengineering for a food that is the subject of the bioengineered food labeling standard under this section that is not identical to the mandatory labeling requirement under this section.

“(e) ENFORCEMENT.—

“(1) PROHIBITED ACT.—It shall be a prohibited act for a person to knowingly fail to make a disclosure as required under this section.

“(2) RECORDKEEPING.—Each person subject to the mandatory labeling requirement under this section shall maintain, and make available to the Secretary, on request, such records as the Secretary determines to be customary or reasonable in the food industry, by regulation, to establish compliance with this section.

“(3) EXAMINATION AND AUDIT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may conduct an examination, audit, or similar activity with respect to any records required under paragraph (2).

“(B) NOTICE AND HEARING.—A person subject to an examination, audit, or similar activity under subparagraph (A) shall be provided notice and opportunity for a hearing before an administrative law judge on the results of any examination, audit, or similar activity.

“(C) AUDIT RESULTS.—After the notice and opportunity for a hearing under subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall make public the summary of any examination, audit, or similar activity under subparagraph (A).

“(4) RECALL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall have no authority to recall any food subject to this subtitle on the basis of whether the food is labeled as bioengineered or developed or produced using bioengineering.

“SEC. 294B. SAVINGS PROVISIONS.

“(a) TRADE.—This subtitle shall be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

“(b) OTHER.—Nothing in this subtitle—

“(1) affects the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services or creates any rights or obligations for any person under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or

“(2) affects the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury or creates any rights or obligations for any person under the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (27 U.S.C. 201 et seq.).

“Subtitle F—Labeling of Certain Food

“SEC. 295. FEDERAL PREEMPTION.

“(a) DEFINITION OF FOOD.—In this subtitle, the term ‘food’ has the meaning given the

term in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

“(b) **FEDERAL PREEMPTION.**—No State or a political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food or seed in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling of whether a food (including food served in a restaurant or similar establishment) or seed is genetically engineered (which shall include such other similar terms as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture) or was developed or produced using genetic engineering, including any requirement for claims that a food or seed is or contains an ingredient that was developed or produced using genetic engineering.”.

NATIONAL SPEECH AND DEBATE EDUCATION DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 398, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 398) designating March 15, 2016, as “National Speech and Debate Education Day”.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 398) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the majority 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: Ambassador Jackie Wolcott of Virginia.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 15; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following

leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the Senate stand in recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, at 2:15 p.m., the Senate then resume consideration of the message to accompany S. 764.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 MERKLEY.

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

The Senator from Oregon.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise to address the motion that is on the floor right now, which is a motion to adopt an amendment that is essentially a new version of the Monsanto DARK Act. Now, DARK is an acronym that stands for “Denying Americans the Right to Know.” This is, by the way, an amendment that has not been seen in any committee in the Senate ever.

We heard a lot of discussion about how we were going to have a process in this Chamber where things would be in the ordinary fashion—go through the committee so it could be digested and analyzed—but instead this amendment is to an underlying bill that has been ping-ponging back and forth between the House and Senate. This legislation has never been heard in committee. It was crafted over the last few hours. Here we are with a fundamental issue of citizens’ right to know, and the majority leader of this Chamber has decided to bypass any ordinary consideration to jam this through on behalf of Monsanto.

What is at stake here? What is citizens’ right to know about? It is about genetically modified or genetically engineered ingredients that are in their food. Across the country 90 percent of Americans want to have some indication of what is in their food and whether there are GE ingredients. They feel this is relevant to what they would like to buy. Even if they don’t personally look it up when they buy a product, they feel citizens should have a right to know. I rounded it off and said 90 percent, but it is actually 89 percent. The survey took place last fall. I believe it took place in November of 2015. This fundamental notion about the right to know what is in your food transcends every ideology in our country.

The Presidential primary season is going on right now, and we are seeing

a huge range of ideologies from the left to the right on display, but when we talk to citizens about this right to know, it doesn’t matter if they are Democrats, Independents, Republicans, rightwing Republicans or leftwing Democrats, they all come out essentially the same. Let’s break it down by each party. Democrats are at 9 to 1, or 92 percent; Republicans are at 84 percent, which rounds out to about 8½ Republicans to 1 Republican. It is a huge ratio. Independents are 9 to 1, or 89 percent. When asked if they feel strongly about this, they say, yes, they do feel strongly about this. That just goes to the fundamental notion that here in America citizens believe they have the right to make up their own minds and not have the overreach of the Federal Government telling them what to believe or the government saying: You can’t have the information you want in order to make your decision as a consumer. Citizens resent that. Citizens get angry about that. Yet right now the majority party in this Chamber is trying to push through just such a repression of a citizen’s right to know.

This has been triggered by a law in Vermont. Citizens in Vermont voted and decided they want to know if their food has GE, genetically engineered, ingredients, and that law goes into effect on July 1 of this year. Our big food industry—Monsanto and friends—said: No, we can’t let the citizens of Vermont have the information they want. We must pass a Federal law to stop them. By the way, we need to stop every other State in the United States of America and every other subdivision of any State in the United States of America from providing this information, which 9 out of 10 Americans want to have listed on their food.

We are all acquainted with labels on food. That is not something new. Some citizens look at it to determine how many calories are in the food. Others look at what vitamins may be in the food or if it meets the daily recommended dose of vitamins. Some go to see if it has a form of cornstarch, corn sugar, or high fructose corn syrup that maybe they like or don’t like.

We also have labeling laws about other things consumers care about on their food. If you sell fish in a grocery store in America, you have to tell the consumer whether that fish has been caught in the wild or whether it has been raised on a farm. Why? Because citizens wanted that information. They considered that relevant to their decision about their purchase of foods for themselves and their families.

Let’s consider the fact that here in America if you put juice in a store, you have to say whether it is made from concentrate or whether it is fresh. Why? Because consumers thought that was relevant to how they would like to exercise their judgment. Well, 9 out of 10 Americans say they want the information on whether there are GE ingredients, but now we have this bill on the floor—this Monsanto DARK Act addition 2.0—that says, no, we are going to

take away that power from every State in the country, not just Vermont, not just my home State of Oregon but every State. We are going to take it away from any subdivision of those States. We are going to black out that information so consumers can't have it.

Here is the question we face: Are we going to hold a vote this week in this Chamber, as scheduled by the majority leader for Wednesday, to shut down debate on this topic? The majority leader didn't allow debate today because he just introduced the bill tonight and he just set the schedule for tomorrow. We are not going to have the debate until 2:15 p.m. tomorrow, and he said we are going to vote on Wednesday morning on this critical issue affecting citizens' right to know. So on behalf of Monsanto and friends, he wants to make sure there are only a few hours of debate and that the citizens of our country don't even know this dirty deed is being done in this Chamber. That is why I am speaking right now, because it is important for the citizens to know this is being rammed through right now at a time when it is most likely not going to gain public attention.

Why is that? Why did the majority leader do this on a Monday night right before the five big primaries that occur tomorrow? Because the news media is very busy covering those five big primaries. Who is going to win the Republican primary in Florida that will affect, one way or another, whether a Member in this Chamber stays in the race? Who will win the Republican primary in Ohio? That is possibly going to affect whether the frontrunner gets a majority by the time the convention comes up. Who is going to win the Democratic primary in Illinois? Who is going to win the Democratic primary in Ohio? That will have a big impact on the rhythm of that. So the media is very consumed and very busy, and that is why here, on the eve of this major Tuesday primary, this bill has been put on the floor. Americans have no idea it is happening. They can ram this thing through with no notice to the American people because, again, this bill was never considered in committee. This is a whole new creature—this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0.

What specifically does it do and how has it morphed? Well, this is very interesting. This act says States are banned from providing information that 9 out of 10 of their citizens want. It says subdivisions are banned from providing information that 9 out of 10 of their citizens want, and then it says there will be a voluntary program, and if, after a series of years, citizens can get information based on consumer inquiries, then this ban will continue forever. If they can't get the information on 70 percent of the major foods that are being sold, then all that is required is a response to consumer inquiries. In other words, no labeling requirement, no simple fashion for a consumer to find out what is in their food. If we put

a ban on States from providing easy-to-use consumer information about GM or GE ingredients, then there must be a national consumer easy-to-use indication on the label.

The argument is put forward—and I share it—that 50 different State standards would be confusing and expensive and almost impossible to implement. One warehouse serves multiple States and so on and so forth. Having a different label in every State makes no sense. OK. I take that point. But if we are going to ban the States from providing the information consumers want on the argument that there should be one national standard for simplicity, then there must be a consumer-friendly national standard, and there is no such standard in this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 placed on the floor tonight.

There is an interesting twist here because they have proposed some ideas that are different from putting consumer-friendly information on the label. The first of those ideas is a 1-800 number. It works like this. Let's say, like my daughter, you are interested in high fructose corn syrup.

I am going to use this book here as a visual aid, and I ask unanimous consent to do so.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. I thank the Chair.

Imagine these are products that are in the grocery store. So I, the consumer, am going down the aisle, and I say: I want to know whether these contain high fructose corn syrup. Well, I turn it over and look at the ingredients, and I see that one does. Looking at this one: No, this one doesn't. Let me check the third. It is right here. I have the answer. I have checked three products in 5 seconds. That is consumer friendly. But let's say we have to call the 1-800 number to find out.

I ask unanimous consent to use my cell phone as a visual aid.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. So now I have to pull my cell phone out of my pocket, and I have to find this number that is probably too small for me to read. I have to turn on my phone and hope there is a cell connection in the store, which there may or may not be. I dial it up. Oh, I am talking to somebody in the Philippines, and they have no idea what I am asking about. Oh, I am talking to some call center somewhere else, and they have all kinds of information, but they are not sure exactly what my question is about GE ingredients. And maybe I have to wait 15 minutes while I am on hold. We have all had that experience. Every one of us has had the experience of not just waiting 15 minutes; we call a consumer help line or maybe a 1-800 number and maybe it is half an hour. They give you a little message: We are sorry, we have a high call volume and we just can't get to you yet, but we will get back to you in maybe 30 or 40 minutes. I am standing here in the aisle. I want to compare

these three products. I have to call three different 800 numbers. I ask, can anyone on this floor stand up and say this is a consumer-friendly way to answer the fundamental question as to whether there is a GE or GM—genetically engineered or genetically modified—ingredient? No. This is absurd. This is a sham. That is why it is sham No. 1.

But there is not just one sham in this bill; there are more. The second sham is a computer code. So picture this: Instead of being able to pick up a product and say "I want to see if this has peanuts in it; I am allergic to peanuts," I can check my second product. Oh, here it is. I check the third product. No, no peanuts. I am allergic to peanuts. In 5 seconds, I have checked three products. That is consumer friendly.

But now this second sham is that I have to have a smartphone with me. I have to take a picture of this code called a quick response code, and that will take me to a Web site, and maybe I will find out the information in the format presented by the company itself, which will probably be completely incomprehensible and indigestible. All I wanted to know was whether there is a GM ingredient. But now I have to take a picture. I have to go to a Web site. I have to negotiate the information on the Web site. All I needed was a little symbol right here. It doesn't matter what the symbol is. It could be "GM." It could be "GE." It could be a "t" for transgenic. That is what Brazil uses. It could be a happy face. Just anything so that consumers knew what that symbol stood for. That would allow them to check it very quickly and very easily.

A QR code is even more diabolical because when you use your phone to take a picture of this and go to that Web site, they track some of your information. You have to give up your privacy. I have to give up my privacy to find out if there is a GE ingredient in the food I am eating? No. No way. No how. Just wrong. An invasion, an overreach of the Federal Government asking me to give up my privacy by having to take a picture of this.

Envision now whether this is really practical in any way. Not only might it take half an hour to go through those three different QR codes and find out what they really mean, but I am shopping for groceries. This is just one item I want to buy. I want to buy a can of soup. That is what I want to do. But I have 20 more things on my list. I go to the second thing. Maybe I want to buy hot dogs, and now there are 10 different versions of hot dogs. What am I going to do—take a picture of all 10 hot dogs for my second item on the list?

Now I am 2 hours into my shopping trip. I have a child in the grocery cart who is hungry and who is tired and who wants to go home. I want to go home. I want to get home and cook dinner for myself and my family. I have to spend 2 hours to check out two products on my grocery shopping list. This is a complete sham.

There is even more to come. This is sham No. 3 that is in the Monsanto Protection Act, Monsanto DARK Act—Denying Americans the Right to Know—2.0. Here is a wonderful idea. This says a company can provide information via social media, as in Facebook or Twitter or who knows what—Instagram. So here I am now. Picture this. This really takes the cake. I am in the store. I care about GE ingredients, and I check product No. 1 for their 800 number, but they don't have an 800 number, or they have it but it is not for this purpose because this company has done their voluntary disclosure not through the 800 number. So I think, well, am I supposed to take a picture of the smart code? I look for it. Maybe I find one. I take a picture, I go to the Web site, but no information is there because this company has decided to do voluntary disclosure through social media. Well, which social media? I am supposed to know if they are putting it up on Facebook or if they are supposed to be putting it on Instagram or on Twitter? No, because they can put it anywhere they want.

So here we have a completely unworkable system in every possible way. In other words, all three of these ideas were put into this bill solely for the pretense that there is some form of disclosure to consumers.

Now, why would the author of this bill that was put on the floor tonight go to this tremendous effort to have this pretense about disclosure? Well, let's go back to where I started. The reason for the pretense is that 9 out of 10 Americans want to know. So this is a scam on the American people.

Right now, citizens in our country are very angry. They are very upset. We have gone through four decades in which the middle class has been squeezed, and they know they are getting the short end of the stick. They know that our national wealth has grown enormously but nothing is shared with the middle class. They know the system is rigged. And here comes our majority leader to put a bill on the floor that further rigs the system with this Monsanto DARK Act edition 2.0.

So citizens across the country, this is being done to take away your rights when you are not paying attention because we are in the middle of a major primary tomorrow. So if you are aware of this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 being on the floor right now and that there is going to be a vote on it on Wednesday morning, then weigh in and say it is not all right. Share with other Americans on your social media and say that this sham disclosure bill is not OK, that taking away the desire and right of 9 out of 10 Americans to want to know if there is GE ingredients in their food—taking away that right is a complete travesty.

This is the type of overreach that makes citizens mad. This is the type of jam-through legislation on behalf of a powerful special interest to take away

what citizens care about that makes people mad. My colleagues across the aisle know that, so they want to jam this through in the dark of night when the country is not paying attention. That is simply not OK. It is not OK.

Some may say: What is the big deal here? Aren't genetically engineered products all wonderful, and why would any citizen actually be concerned about them? Why do these 9 out of 10 citizens have this desire? They are just misled. There is no concern about GE ingredients. We are just taking away their right because they don't know what they are talking about. Their concerns are not legitimate.

Well, I will tell my colleagues tonight that their concerns are legitimate. Genetic engineering can produce a benefit and it can produce problems, and therefore it is the citizens' right to be able to make the evaluation of how they want to spend their dollar, just as it is their right if they want to buy reconstituted juice versus fresh juice, just as it is their right if they want to buy wild fish rather than farmed fish, just as it is their right if they don't want to buy food with high fructose corn syrup, or maybe they do want to buy it, but they get to choose. They get to look at the ingredients and the labeling and they get to choose.

Let me expand a little bit on this because science has provided us with both an accounting of some of the benefits and an accounting of some of the problems. Science indicates that there is some truth in both. For example, let's take one of the benefits. This is a picture of golden rice. Well, what is golden rice? In parts of the world, citizens suffer from a big deficiency of vitamin A. Therefore, this rice has been genetically engineered to have vitamin A in it, and it can, in parts of the world where rice is routinely eaten, help address that. Folks have said that is a good thing. Now, I don't know all the reverberations of cultivating this type of rice versus another type of rice. There might be a problem hidden away in those different cultivation techniques. But by and large, I have heard positive things about golden rice helping address a vitamin deficiency.

Let's take transgenic carrots. Their cells have been cultivated in order to provide a substance that provides a cure to Gaucher's disease. So that seems like a benefit because people who suffer from Gaucher's disease are awfully happy about having a remedy.

Let's take yams grown in South Africa. Well, they have several different viruses that affect these yams, and so by genetically engineering to resist these viruses, as far as I am aware, we don't know yet of any side effects that are a problem. As of now, this can be something that is generally registered as a benefit, to have that resistance to these viruses. There is even discussion of genetic modifications that can be done that serve in lieu of immunizations. That is a very interesting scientific idea. That could be a way to

provide resistance to humans with certain diseases.

That is only part of the story. Just as science has documented that there are benefits, there are also some concerns. Here in the United States, the major genetic modification is something called Roundup Ready. It makes a particular plant immune to the effects of an herbicide. Herbicides kill the plants, so this makes the plant immune to the substance that kills plants. Therefore, you can use this herbicide to control weeds without killing the corn or without killing sugar beets or without killing the cotton, and so forth.

(Mr. DAINES assumed the Chair.)

So what have we seen? Since this genetically engineered quality was developed, we have seen a massive increase in the use of herbicides on crops. It has gone from 7.4 million pounds back in 1994 to now over 160 million pounds. We see this massive increase and its continued path to 2012. One of the effects is that if you have this massive 160 million pounds of herbicide on fields that weren't there 20 years earlier, what you have is a lot of runoff of herbicide into our streams and into our rivers. When you put plant-killing stuff in our streams and rivers, it has an impact on the ecosystem. That is a scientifically documented legitimate concern.

There is another concern. When we tilled fields to take down the weeds, it was mechanical, and in that disturbed soil grew a variety of things and the edges of fields grew a variety of things. One example is milkweed. It has been scientifically documented that there is a big reduction in these miscellaneous weeds and some of the related insects and species that otherwise would have inhabited that area near these fields. One example is the monarch butterfly. The monarch butterfly has crashed in the Midwest because of the dramatic reduction in milkweed with a change from mechanical tilling to herbicide control of weeds. That is just the canary in the coal mine—or the monarch in the coal mine. We don't know what else is being affected by this massive application of herbicides.

Here is another challenge. This is an interesting genetic modification. This is called Bt corn. Bt corn has been genetically modified so it produces a pesticide inside each corn cell, and particularly the goal is that when the larvae of these beetles start eating, the pesticide would kill the larvae of these beetles. These larvae are referred to as the "western corn worm."

The western corn worm does a lot of damage, and you put the pesticide inside the cells. Both the larvae and the beetles themselves like to eat the corn. They like to eat the strands of pollen that pollinate the corn. What can end up is corn that has only a few kernels on them. There is a greatly reduced amount of kernels as a result of the pollen being compromised. What is happening as a result of the prevalence of this Bt corn which is grown all over the United States? What is happening

is that these larvae of the corn worms and beetles are developing a resistance to it because Mother Nature has a few surprises. At any one moment in a large population, there are thousands or millions of accidental mutations occurring. Out of those mutations, when millions and millions of these beetles and their larvae are exposed, eventually a few of them have a mutation that makes them immune to the pesticide. Then they proceed to have offspring, and then the offspring have more mutations and become more resistant. Suddenly, you now have to go back and put pesticides in these fields, even though there is a pesticide produced in each cell of the corn itself. That type of biofeedback is scientifically documented. That is a concern.

There is an impact on creating what is sometimes called superweeds through herbicides and superbugs that are pesticide-resistant through the massive application of Bt GE engineering.

This chart is just a reference to the problem in the waterways that I have already spoken to, so I don't think I need to repeat that.

If there are advantages or benefits and there are scientifically documented problems, shouldn't it be up to the consumer to decide if they want to buy a product with genetically engineered ingredients? They are not stupid. They are not crazy. They have not invented some concerns. There are legitimate, scientifically documented benefits and legitimate scientifically documented concerns. So it should be up to the consumer.

We tell consumers: Hey, you have thoughts about whether you would rather have wild fish or farm-raised fish, for example. Why do we require that? I will give you an example from the Pacific Northwest. In the Pacific Northwest a lot of salmon are raised in ocean pens. Those are farmed fish. They are very close together, and because they are very close together, they develop more diseases. There is a type of sea lice that becomes prevalent. Also, because they are not eating the same stuff wild fish eat, their meat is white, so they have to be fed a dye to make their meat the same color as wild salmon. There are folks who hear that and say: I have a preference. I would rather have farmed fish because they are cheaper, or I would rather have wild fish because I don't like the way farmed fish is raised. Maybe one likes the idea of supporting the wild fishing industry rather than the farm fishing industry. That is why we require the disclosure. So it should be a citizen's right to know.

Right now here is where we are with this issue being jammed through in the middle of the night on behalf of a very powerful special interest, even though 9 out of 10 Americans don't agree.

Well, let's ask the Presidential candidates where they stand—each and every candidate, Hillary Clinton and BERNIE SANDERS from the Democratic

side, Mr. Trump, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. Kasich on the Republican side: Where do you stand on this issue that is going to be voted on Wednesday morning in this Chamber? Do you stand with the 9 out of 10 Americans who want the right to know whether there are GE ingredients in their food? Do you stand with the people, or do you stand with the powerful special interests that want American citizens to be kept in the dark? This is very relevant. Folks voting tomorrow in five primaries, in Florida, Illinois—whatever the other three are tomorrow—they want to know where the Presidential candidates stand. Are they going to be the type of leader who stands with the people, or are they going to be the type that wants to approve and say it is OK to slam this Deny Americans the Right to Know Act 2.0—this Monsanto act. It is all right to slam it through with no committee consideration in the dark of night when the country is not paying attention because of the big set of primaries tomorrow. I want to know where they stand.

So I say to these candidates on the Republican side and the Democratic side: Call us up. Tell us where you stand. Call my office: 202-224-3753. I will let the rest of the Senate know where you stand. We will make sure everyone knows whether you, the Presidential candidates, stand with the citizens of America and the right to know or whether you stand with the powerful special interests that want to strip States' rights to inform their citizens about information that they want.

I want to know from the Presidential candidates: Do you believe that the Federal Government should strip States of the ability to label, even if their labels are all consistent with each other? Do you think that is OK? Do you care about States' rights? Do you see States as a laboratory where we can experiment with ideas and see if they work or not?

Right now Vermont is a laboratory. On July 1 they are going to have their first labeling law in the country, and that is an experiment that their citizens wanted, consistent with 9 out of 10 Americans who want to know. They responded; Vermont responded. They are the first State in the Union to do so. Are we going to cut that short? We are going to trash that ability of Vermont to conduct this experiment? We are going to stomp on the citizens' rights to know, not just in Vermont but in Oregon, Montana, Florida, and all 50 States, and throw in a few U.S. territories as well?

Now the argument is made that this is very dangerous because there could be multiple States that produce different standards. But that doesn't exist. There will not be multiple States in July. There is only one State that has a bill. So it is a phony argument to say that this is somehow causing big, expensive problems because there are conflicting State standards, because

there are no conflicting State standards. It is just one great State that responded to its citizens' desires. Who are we to stop that experiment now? We should endorse that experiment. We should endorse that State laboratory. We should watch to see how well it works. We know citizens want this and that they care a lot. So why take it away just because Monsanto and friends don't want Americans to know?

How many Members here want to go home to their citizens and say: You know what, I represent all of us here in our State of Iowa or our State of Florida or our State of Montana or our State of Oregon—my home State—and it is OK with me if the Federal Government takes away your rights on something you really care about. That is what this Chamber is poised to do. That is why they are doing it in the dark of night, because the Senators who are here who are prepared to vote for the Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 don't want their citizens to know about it. That is why they have encouraged the strategy of putting it on the Senate floor on Monday night right before the big Tuesday primary, because citizens care a lot about knowing what they put in their mouth, and they care a lot about what they feed to their children. It is not simply whether it will make them sick. They care about the implications about the way different food is raised.

When we talk about the difference between farmed fish and wild fish, it doesn't have anything to do with what is going to poison you. It isn't even necessarily the taste. The taste may be similar. It is about the citizens' concerns about the way the harvesting is done, about the way the crop is grown, the produce is grown. When we talk about the difference between constituted juice and we require disclosure, the difference between fresh juice and concentrated juice, it isn't because it is going to poison us when we put in our bodies, it is because citizens care about the process that got them to the product they are about to buy. They care about this, too.

They care about it—Democrats, 92 percent; Republicans, 84 percent; Independents, 89 percent. In this deeply divided country, when 9 out of 10 folks—Independents, Democrats, or Republicans—all say it is important, shouldn't we honor that? Shouldn't we not trounce on their rights? Shouldn't we not suppress the first State pilot project on something that 9 out of 10 citizens across the spectrum agree on? Yet that is the dirty deed this Chamber is planning for Wednesday morning. It is just wrong.

I am deeply disturbed about what has become of our "we the people" Nation. What are those beautiful first three words of our Constitution? If you ask that in any townhall in America, the crowd at the townhall will respond: "We the People." Those words are carved in our hearts because the core principle on which this Nation was

founded is that we would establish a republic where the decisions would be of, by, and for the people. But this vote on Wednesday morning is not of, by, and for the people; it is of, by, and for Monsanto and friends because they want to take away what we the people care about—the right to know whether there are GE ingredients in their food.

Each of us came to Congress and we pledged to uphold our responsibilities under the Constitution. I would have to assume that each and every one of the 100 Senators on this floor had actually read the Constitution. I certainly hope every Senator on this floor knows it starts out “We the People,” and I hope they understand why.

After President Jefferson was out of office, he talked about the mother principle of our Republic, and that is that the decisions will serve the people. He talked about how for that to happen for each citizen, there has to be an equal voice.

You can imagine the vision of the town square and that there is no charge for standing in the town square and expressing your opinion. It is free. But every citizen gets to stand and have their say with an equal voice before a vote is taken. That is the equal voice President Jefferson talked about. That is the equal voice concept President Lincoln talked about, that understanding that each citizen would have a proportionate equal voice. That was embedded in our Founders’ minds. They hadn’t yet envisioned a world in which the town square is now for sale. The town square is now for sale. The town square is television, radio. You have to buy ads on it, and it is expensive. So you have to pay to stand and make your point. And those with the most money get to stand up for a longer period of time than those with little money. Those with the most money get to purchase the equivalent of a stadium sound system to drown out the voice of ordinary people.

Here is what I want to know: On Wednesday morning, is this Chamber going to respond to those with those stadium sound systems and proceed to drown out the voice of the people?

Let’s put up that 89 percent chart.

This is the choice of the people—Democrats, Republicans, Independents who care about this. Wednesday morning, are we going to drown out their desires on behalf of the powerful special interests? Are we going to stamp out States’ rights on behalf of a powerful special interest?

Let’s not do that. Let’s not go in that shameful direction, that direction which is completely contrary to the principles that founded this Nation of an equal voice, a nation, as Lincoln said, that operates of, by, and for the people.

If we want to have this debate over conflicting State labels, then fine. Let’s create a common standard. Let’s create one common standard for the entire country, a little symbol on the ingredients. That is all it would take.

It could be any symbol, and the FDA could choose it so there is nothing pejorative about it. It is not taking up space on the package. It is not taking up space on the cover. It is not pejorative. It is not demeaning. It doesn’t imply there is anything wrong. It just says this is something citizens want to know, just as they want to know farm versus wild for fish; just as they want to know concentrate versus nonconcentrate for juice; just as they want to know what minerals, vitamins, and ingredients are in the food they are buying. This they want to know. So honor that. Let’s not tear down that vision laid out in the first three words of our Constitution and replace “We the People” with “We the Titans.”

If you want to be a Senator in a republic that starts out with a Constitution that says “We the Titans,” then please go be a Senator in a different nation. Go to work somewhere else but not here in the United States of America where we have a responsibility to the citizens and the citizens are clear on where they stand.

So if we must vote on Wednesday—and there is no need to. We are only voting on Wednesday because within seconds of this bill being introduced tonight, the majority leader also put forward a petition that forces a vote on closing debate on Wednesday morning. No. So before anyone has had a word to say, a petition has already been filed to close debate. What kind of a democratic process is that? So the only time to speak to this is tomorrow when the whole world is paying attention to the primaries in five different States—and tonight. That is why I am speaking tonight.

So I am hoping a few people are tuned in enough to activate their networks and to say: This is wrong, Mr. Majority Leader. Pull that bill from this floor. That is a terrible assault on deliberative democracy. Send it to a committee and actually have a debate on it so people can analyze it. Give people in that committee the opportunity to do amendments. Give citizens across the Nation the chance to find out this is going on. Honor the people of this Nation and their right to know.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:52 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. MARK H. BERRY

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. GREGORY S. CHAMPAGNE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. MARSHALL B. WEBB

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ROBERT N. POLUMBO

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. DANIEL J. SWAIN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES J. KEEFE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANDREA D. TULLOS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. BRADLEY C. SALTZMAN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANDREW E. SALAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. CRAIG D. WILLS

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. TAMHRA L. HUTCHINS-FRYE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. CURTIS M. SCAPARROTTI

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. LINDA L. SINGH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. AUSTIN S. MILLER

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. WILLIAM J. PRENDERGAST IV

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADES INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM P. BARRIAGE
BRIG. GEN. PETER A. BOSSE

BRIG. GEN. TROY D. KOK
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM S. LEE

To be brigadier general

COL. MARILYN S. CHIAFULLO
COL. ALEX B. FINK
COL. JOHN B. HASHEM
COL. SUSAN E. HENDERSON
COL. ANDREW J. JUKNELIS
COL. JEFFREY W. JURASEK
COL. DEBORAH L. KOTULICH
COL. JOHN H. PHILLIPS
COL. STEPHEN T. SAUTER
COL. STEPHEN E. STRAND

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B).

To be colonel

MARTIN T. MITCHELL

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGES ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGES PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGN-

MENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B):

To be colonel

LARSS G. CELTNIKS
JAMES W. HERRING, JR.

To be lieutenant colonel

PAULETTE V. BURTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY DENTAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

ERIC DANKO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

STEVEN N. CAROZZA
NOAH C. CLOUD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

RAMIT RING

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORD-

ANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B):

To be captain

DONALD C. KING

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B):

To be colonel

KURT J. BRUBAKER

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by
the Senate March 14, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JOHN B. KING, OF NEW YORK, TO BE SECRETARY OF
EDUCATION.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE MEMORY OF RABBI GORDON

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend and leader in the Jewish community, Rabbi Joshua B. Gordon, who passed away on February 8, 2016.

Rabbi Gordon and his wife Deborah came to the San Fernando Valley in 1973 as emissaries of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, leader of the worldwide Chabad movement of Judaism. In his more than 40 years of leadership, Rabbi Gordon oversaw the growth of Chabad of the Valley to 26 centers that provide religious education, spiritual inspiration and charitable services to thousands. In fact, Rabbi Gordon's reach was worldwide through his popular audio and video Torah classes that continue to educate people online.

I had the privilege of learning directly from Rabbi Gordon as a congregant of his spiritual home, Chabad of Encino, where I would often attend High Holiday services. The highlight of each Rosh Hashanah was to listen to Rabbi Gordon's stories and parables.

I extend my sincerest condolences to Rabbi Gordon's wife, Rebbetzin Deborah Gordon, and children, Rabbi Yossi Gordon, Yochanon Gordon, Faygie Herzog, Rabbi Eli Gordon, Dena Rabin and Chaya Mushka Drizin; as well as his siblings and 21 grandchildren. A man with 21 grandchildren is truly blessed.

It is Rabbi Gordon's enduring legacy that future generations of Valley residents will learn, grow and come together as a community.

RECOGNIZING NORTHWEST INDIANA'S NEWLY NATURALIZED CITIZENS

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and sincerity that I take this time to congratulate thirty individuals who took their oath of citizenship on Friday, March 11, 2016. This memorable occasion, which was presided over by Magistrate Judge Paul R. Cherry, was held at the United States Courthouse and Federal Building in Hammond, Indiana.

America is a country founded by immigrants. From its beginning, settlers have come from countries around the world to the United States in search of better lives for their families. Oath ceremonies are a shining example of what is so great about the United States of America—that people from all over the world can come together and unite as members of a free, democratic nation. These individuals

realize that nowhere else in the world offers a better opportunity for success than here in America.

On March 11, 2016, the following people, representing many nations throughout the world, took their oaths of citizenship in Hammond, Indiana: Julianne Makhoul Mikhael, Monika Cadikovska, Chaudhry Abdul Sattar, Ali Yigit, Nicolae Tarfulea, Nicoleta Eugenia Tarfulea, Chandrashekar Reddy Cholleti, Juan Juarez Hernandez, Young Suk Lee, Sylvia Cathy Gould, Stanko Cude, Logain Alsatti, Lars Olof Wahlen, Rigoberto Acosta Ramirez, Danilo Legaspi Bautista, Solange Jones, Angela Elizabeth Snider, Jorge Carranza Martinez, Lilibeth Catudan Natividad, Glenda Ragob Bakalar, Gilberto Antonio Benavides Alvarez, Chuto Victoria Emeka-Daniels, Heriberto Garcia, Jasmina Golabovska, Francisco Cordova Hernandez, Pamela Mendoza Lawrence, Nora Cylla Menad, Miguel Meza, Sandra Miramontes Mungula, and Parfait Karim Ukobizaba.

Although each individual has sought to become a citizen of the United States for his or her own reasons, be it for education, occupation, or to offer their loved ones better lives, each is inspired by the fact that the United States of America is, as Abraham Lincoln described it, a country "... of the people, by the people, and for the people." They realize that the United States is truly a free nation. By seeking American citizenship, they have made the decision that they want to live in a place where, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution, they can practice religion as they choose, speak their minds without fear of punishment, and assemble in peaceful protest should they choose to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals who became citizens of the United States of America on March 11, 2016. They, too, are American citizens, and they, too, are guaranteed the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.

HONORING YONKERS POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of Yonkers' oldest and most distinguished institutions, the Yonkers Police Benevolent Association, which is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2016. Our Yonkers police do such a fantastic job of keeping us safe, and it is my pleasure to be able to honor the Yonkers PBA on their historic milestone.

The Yonkers Police Department was first established in 1871, though the group would not be incorporated for several more decades.

On September 8, 1916 A.S. Tompkins, Justice of the Westchester County Supreme Court, approved and signed the certificate of incorporation for the Yonkers Police Association. The first president of the Police Association who was elected in 1916 was "Patrolman" John F. Dahill. Upon his election, he was dubbed the "Father of the Police Association" and served in that capacity for several years.

Today the former Yonkers Police Association (YPA), later renamed the Yonkers "Police Benevolent Association" (PBA), continues to serve as an advocate and effective voice for its entire membership. And while working to foster a spirit of camaraderie amongst its members, it also works toward developing a greater understanding, mutual respect, and a helpful relationship with the citizens its members serve so proudly.

I want to congratulate all the members of the Yonkers PBA on 100 years of service to the community, and thank them for all they do to keep us safe and secure in Yonkers.

IN TRIBUTE OF HANNES SCHNEIDER, AND THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HANNES SCHNEIDER MEISTER CUP RACE

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of the Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race which honors the Austrian skimeister Hannes Schneider. Schneider was a vital figure in creating the modern skiing technique, ski instruction and mountain resort industry that we know today. Additionally, he was featured in several ski films and published a book, *The Wonders of Skiing*, in 1931.

In 1938 Schneider was imprisoned by Austrian Nazis due to his rejection of their dogma, despite protests from the international skiing community. Thankfully, nine months later Schneider's freedom was obtained by international financier, North Conway native and Mount Cranmore founder Harvey Dow Gibson. On February 11th, 1939, Schneider and his family arrived in North Conway to begin their new lives in New Hampshire.

Schneider immediately gave back to the country that welcomed him. During World War II, he served as a trainer for the 10th Mountain Division. He taught the soldiers skiing, a skill that served them well during mountain warfare. His son joined this unit, and served honorably during the war. The soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division would go on to be some of the essential figures in the development of US skiing after the war.

Once victory was won, Schneider used the instruction skills he honed during the war at his soon to be world famous Hannes Schneider Ski School on Mount Cranmore. Schneider created the Airlberg skiing instruction technique. This widely used method teaches students to start out skiing in a wedge or pizza

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

shape, while making a series of turns to control their speed. As students improve, they ski downhill with their skis parallel. Countless skiers, including my sons, have experienced the joy of alpine skiing because of Hannes' innovative method of instruction.

Hannes dedicated his life to skiing. He continued to instruct thousands of pupils until his death in 1955. The Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race, which on March 12, 2016 is celebrating its 20th anniversary, is staged by the New England Ski Museum to honor the legacy of Hannes Schneider and the veterans of the 10th Mountain Division. I am proud to participate in this year's event, and to honor the great achievements of Hannes Schneider.

RECOGNIZING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I rise to celebrate National Women's History Month and its 2016 theme, "Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government." As we reflect on the struggles, sacrifices, and successes of women throughout our nation's history, this year's theme honors the many women who have helped shape America through governmental roles and civil service. During this month and always, we honor the monumental efforts of American women who fought and continue to fight for gender equality. Women have succeeded in all areas of society, from medicine and science to government and public service, and their contributions have paved the way for a better America.

The pioneers of the women's movement fought for the right to vote for decades. Through their determination, courage, and strong will, the suffragettes proudly witnessed the passage of the nineteenth amendment in 1920. The tireless efforts of these brave women brought more opportunity and democratic change. The women's liberation movement of the 1960's and 1970's helped ensure that women had more say in government while leading the charge against workplace inequality. This helped create better jobs for women and promoted fair pay through anti-discrimination laws. Our nation's success is dependent upon the knowledge, skills, and expertise of women in public service. These strong leaders fight every day for more opportunity and equal rights, and they continue to have a profound impact on our nation.

I would also like to take the time to acknowledge the many women who have served, and continue to serve, the people of the First Congressional District at the local, state, and federal levels. As a lifelong resident of Northwest Indiana, born and raised in the city of Gary, I would be remiss if I did not pay special tribute to one of Northwest Indiana's finest citizens and my dear friend, the Honorable Earline Rogers, State Senator for the 3rd District of Indiana. Senator Rogers will be retiring from office at the end of the year after a remarkable thirty-four years in the state legislature. A teacher by trade and a former Gary city council member, Senator Rogers has devoted her-

self to her fellow citizens and her constituency throughout her lifetime, and she is the epitome of what it means to be a public servant.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating National Women's History Month. We are indebted to the many female leaders in public service who work diligently to improve the quality of life for every American, and they are worthy of the highest praise.

TRIBUTE TO DR. LUCILE M. (LUCY) JONES

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Lucile M. (Lucy) Jones, a pre-eminent leader in the field of seismology, who is retiring from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

Dr. Jones received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Chinese Language and Literature, with a minor in Physics, graduating Magna Cum Laude from Brown University, and her Doctor of Philosophy in Geophysics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dr. Jones has worked for the US Geological Service for the past thirty-three years. During her time at the USGS, she has served in various capacities, most recently as Science Advisor for Risk Reduction, Natural Hazards Mission. In this position she leads long-term science planning for natural hazards research, and directs the Science Application for Risk Reduction (SAFRR) Project, which uses USGS science to help communities at risk for natural disasters. Lucy is also a Visiting Research Associate at the prestigious California Institute of Technology Seismological Laboratory, a position she has held since 1983. Prior to serving as Science Advisor for Risk Reduction, Dr. Jones created, led and was Chief Scientist for the Multi Hazards Demonstration Project (MHDP), whose landmark programs included the Great ShakeOut, an emergency public preparedness program which has been adopted throughout the state of California, and the Southern California Debris Flow Warning System, in partnership with the National Weather Service. Lucy was also a scientist on the USGS Earthquake Hazards Team for many years, including serving as Scientist-in-Charge for Southern California from 1998 to 2006.

In addition to her work with the USGS, Dr. Jones is a member of the California Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council, which advises the Governor of California. She served as seismic safety advisor to Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, raising awareness about the city's need for greater earthquake preparedness. Lucy also served as Commissioner on the California Seismic Safety Commission. Author of multiple scientific papers on seismic research with a primary focus on earthquake hazard assessment and foreshocks, Dr. Jones has often testified before the United States Congress on various public safety seismic matters. Lucy has been the recipient of many awards, including Woman of the Year from the California Science Center, the Shoemaker Award for Lifetime Achievement in Science Communica-

tion from the USGS, U.S. Senator BARBARA BOXER's Women Making History Award, the Alquist Award from the Earthquake Safety Foundation and the Meritorious Service Award from the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Dr. Jones lives in Pasadena, with her husband Dr. Egill Hauksson, who is a fellow seismologist and a Professor at Caltech, and they have two children, Sven and Niels.

Dr. Lucile M. (Lucy) Jones will leave a scientific legacy that will be appreciated for generations to come. I ask all Members to join me today in honoring her for over three decades of exemplary public service.

HONORING THE CAROL MOORE MEMORIAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the outstanding tradition of the Carol Moore Memorial Jazz Festival at Mineral Area College in Park Hills, Missouri. This year commemorates the 30th jazz festival, begun in 1987. Music instructor Carol Moore championed the festival in its early years and helped it grow to its current prominence. Ms. Moore died of cancer in 2008 and the festival was renamed in her honor in 2010. In the years since her death, the jazz festival has been chaired by MAC faculty members Dr. Kevin White, Dan Schunks, and Michael Goldsmith.

The festival features a day of jazz performances by hundreds of students from dozens of schools. This year 42 bands will perform from districts as far away as Arkansas and Kentucky. This festival not only promotes jazz music and inspires current jazz students, it also serves as an effective means to introduce the community and potential students to the college.

In addition, the festival brings world class jazz artists to the area to perform in concert with the community's Kicks Band. These artists have included saxophonist "Blue Lou" Marini of Blues Brothers fame, Delfeayo Marsalis of the famed Marsalis musical dynasty, trumpet player Jon Faddis, a protégé of jazz legend Dizzy Gillespie, and trumpet master Doc Severinsen, who performs at the 30th festival.

For its impressive tradition and significant artistic contributions to the community, it is my pleasure to congratulate the Carol Moore Memorial Jazz Festival on its 30th celebration and to recognize all those involved before the United States House of Representatives.

HELENDALÉ LOSES COMMUNITY LEADER

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the memory of Michael Phillip Gouin, who tragically passed away on February 16, 2016. Michael's life was taken by a drunk driver who struck his motorcycle in Oro Grande, California.

Michael was employed by the Helendale Community Services District as a wastewater treatment plant operator. Previously, he served honorably in the United States Navy and obtained his bachelor's degree from San Diego State University after his time in the service. He also spent time as an employee for the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority some years ago.

Michael was well-known throughout the community of Helendale. He will be remembered for his friendly demeanor and willingness to volunteer his spare time as a youth soccer coach.

I would like to pass along my condolences to Michael's father, mother, and sister, who are undoubtedly in a tremendous amount of pain right now. His family is in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. I ask that this body do the same in the memory of Michael Phillip Gouin.

HONORING HELENE MURTHA
DOOLEY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival in Eastchester has become one of the great social events in my district, drawing the entire community together every year in the spirit of camaraderie and fun. The celebration is just one of the reasons why Eastchester is such a tight knit community, and without the incredible volunteer efforts of this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal, Helene Murtha Dooley, it simply could not be done.

The oldest of four children, Helene was born in Queens and grew up on Long Island. She graduated from Fairfield University in 1985 with a BS in Business Management. Subsequently she started a career in banking at JP Morgan on Wall Street, where she met the love of her life and future husband, my good friend Joe Dooley. In 1992 the couple moved to Eastchester where they welcomed their two wonderful children, Brian and Caroline. In 1998 Helene left the business world and began work in the Eastchester School District as the librarian at Greenvale Elementary School. She has taught at all the schools in Eastchester, grades K through 12, and currently works at the middle school/high school library.

In 2001, the Dooley family joined the esteemed Eastchester Irish American Social Club. Helene has volunteered for the EIASC over the years at multiple social events including at various times on the Christmas Party Committee and organized the EIASC's Sash Presentation dinner. She has chaired the St. Patrick's Day Festival several times, served as Mistress of Ceremonies last year, and has even assisted Enda McIntyre as the Saint Patrick's Day Parade roving reporter.

Helene is also an active volunteer in the Eastchester community, serving as Treasurer for the Friends of the Eastchester Public Library, Board Member and Chairperson of the Eastchester Public Library Board, Member of the Neighborhood Association Board, and she has volunteered for the PTAs in all the Eastchester schools.

Helene has done it all, and I cannot think of a more deserving person to be named the 2016 St. Patrick's Day Grand Marshal. Congratulations to Helene on this honor.

TRIBUTE TO PAULEY PERRETTE—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Pauley Perrette of Hollywood, California.

Pauley is an accomplished artist, writer, photographer, and civil rights activist. Her family is from Alabama. She was born in New Orleans and grew up in several southern states. After college where she studied Sociology, Psychology, and Criminal science, she spent time in New York City before moving to Los Angeles working steadily in film and television. She is best known for her portrayal of the beloved Abby Sciuto on the CBS Television Series NCIS, the Number 1 most watched television show in the world.

Pauley's incredible commitment to community is what sets her apart. She is known as a philanthropist and she works with over 30 charities including Project Angel Food, AIDS Project Los Angeles, the Trevor Project, LAFD Foundation, Habitat for Humanities, the Thirst Project, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, the Make a Wish Foundation, the Humane Society, People Assisting with the Homeless, the Los Angeles LGBT Center, Hope Gardens, the Amanda Foundation, the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association, and the Los Angeles Police Department Police Activities League, just to name a few.

Pauley inhabits both a national and local stage with ease. She joined efforts across the nation to bring justice for Alabama and Detroit child murder victims Shannon Paulk and Raven Jeffries. She can be found at National Night Out, an annual effort by the Los Angeles Police Department and Neighborhood Watch to bring together local residents and their police officers. She uses her voice to speak up for the most vulnerable in society, from children to our animal companions, from individuals faced with seemingly insurmountable odds to those fighting for civil rights for themselves and their communities.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Pauley Perrette, for her extraordinary service to the community.

"MY GOLD STAR," A POEM
WRITTEN BY DEBB CLAY

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, as Americans and free people we must always

remember the sacrifices made by those our country sends into harm's way. Their courage and sacrifice allows us to live in a safer world. It is equally fitting that we also remember and consider those who are left behind—their wives, husbands, children and parents. And so I submit a poem entitled "My Gold Star" written by Debb Clay, a retired teacher with 40 years' service to our youth:

I took the road "less traveled" and arrived upon a shore
Where sunlight danced on surface currents—
opening a door
To memories of you and me—our feet upon the sand
And how our voices filled the air as your touch filled my hand.
You were just a little child but even then you knew
That giving of yourself was all that you were meant to do,
And day by day you walked the path that led you toward the day
You'd place your country and its worth ahead of "Self" and say,
"I'll go and serve and do my part to keep my homeland free,
When others tread a different path it matters not to me,
For this I know and will profess to all who choose to hear,
Our country needs us all to serve and that is why I'm here."
I stand alone now on that shore, as sorrow fills my brow
A mix of tears and smiles collide with thoughts of then and now,
Yet as I witness warmth and sparkle from the water's skin,
The silent streams upon my face with brilliant light begin
To fill my heart, the air, this place with who you really are
And what you did and why you had to venture out so far,
So now I'm left without you here—my grief I try to hide
But what I can show is my "star"—it shines as does my pride.

TRIBUTE TO RIVERSIDE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of the 100th Anniversary of Riverside City College as well as the 25th Anniversary of both Moreno Valley College and Norco College. I have had the honor of representing these world-class community colleges for the majority of my term in Congress and am proud to commemorate today's milestones.

Riverside Junior College was founded on this date in 1916, becoming California's seventh community college. In 1964, voters approved the creation of the Riverside Community College District and elected its five member Board. The Board took on an ambitious effort to expand the college in an effort to meet the needs of a fast-growing student body. In 1991, the Riverside Community College District worked with local and state officials to open new campuses in Moreno Valley and Norco. These campuses opened new doors to educational achievement for students across the Inland Empire.

In 2010, each of the District's three campuses were officially recognized as separate colleges, making Moreno Valley College and Norco College the 111th and 112th community colleges in our state. Together, the three colleges make up the Riverside Community College District.

Serving upwards of 50,000 students annually, Riverside Community College District is by far the largest educational institution in the Inland Empire. It has educational centers throughout the region, including the Ben Clark Training Center, the Center for Social Justice and Civil Liberties, the Innovative Learning Center, Rubidoux Annex, and the Culinary Academy. The District awards nearly \$600,000 in scholarships to students each year and its hundreds of thousands of graduates have made significant contributions in science, business, art, education, politics, and medicine.

Supported by the four pillars of—student excellence; academic excellence; community excellence; and workforce excellence, the District and colleges advance our region's economic growth through quality career technical training and services. Their strong focus on continuous workforce development, business attraction, retention and development have helped bring our community through tough recessions and now leave us better prepared for the economy of tomorrow.

Congratulations Riverside City College, Moreno Valley College, and Norco College. It has been my great pleasure to represent you, your faculty and staff, and especially your students. You make the Inland Empire proud.

TRIBUTE TO JANET DIEL—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Janet Diel, of Burbank, California.

Janet Diel is a dedicated volunteer who has committed endless hours of service to a variety of organizations. She has been a member of the Burbank Coordinating Council for nearly three decades, currently serving as President, Co-Chair of the Holiday Basket Program and Chair of the Campership Program. Every year, through their partnership with community members and organizations, the Burbank Coordinating Council provides holiday baskets to hundreds of families whose children participate in the free or reduced cost lunch programs in Burbank schools. This program matches needy families in the community with organizations and families that want to adopt them by providing presents for their children and food for the holidays. Through the Campership Program, needy children between the ages of 8 and 18 are given the opportunity to attend a week of resident or day-camp in the summer.

In addition to her work with the Burbank Coordinating Council, Janet finds time to volun-

teer for several other organizations including the Burbank Tournament of Roses Association, serving as the City Liaison for more than 28 years, the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association, the City of Burbank's Advisory Council on Disabilities, the Burbank Domestic Violence Task Force, the Burbank Human Relations Council, Relay For Life, and the Burbank Transportation Commission, where she has been a member for more than 22 years and is currently serving as Vice Chair. She is also a member of the Burbank Nonprofit Coalition, the Burbank Unified School District School Facilities Oversight Committee, and the Burbank/Los Angeles Kindertransport Association, where she also serves as the Program Director, and annually speaks at Burbank middle schools to bring Holocaust awareness to young people.

Janet has been the recipient of several awards, including the Burbank Council PTA's prestigious Golden Oak Service Award in 2010. She has been married to her husband, Henry Diel, for 35 years, they have five children, and one grandson.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Janet Diel, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING DR. JOSEPH F. SHELEY

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Dr. Joseph F. Sheley, President of the California State University, Stanislaus, to thank him for his leadership and dedication to the academic advancement of the Central Valley. President Sheley announced he will be retiring on July 1, 2016.

On June 11, 2012, Dr. Joseph Sheley joined California State University, Stanislaus, as the interim president. Less than a year later, on May 22, 2013, he was appointed president of the University by the California State University Board of Trustees.

Dr. Sheley graduated from Sacramento State College in 1969, and earned his bachelor's degree in social sciences. In 1971, Dr. Sheley completed his Master's in sociology. He later attained his Doctorate in sociology from the University of Massachusetts in 1975.

In the fall of 1975, Dr. Sheley began working at Tulane University in New Orleans as part of the sociology faculty. He continued his career at Tulane University for the 21 years thereafter. During those 21 years, between 1985 and 1991, Dr. Sheley served as the chair of Tulane's Department of Sociology. Dr. Sheley returned to Sacramento State in 1996, and served as the Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies.

In 2005, Dr. Sheley became the Executive Vice President at California State University, Sacramento, and served as the university's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs from 2006 to 2012. He was recognized for his commitment and dedication to his alma mater and to the collegiate system by being awarded the Sacramento State's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Sheley is a visionary leader who worked diligently to build strong relationships between

the university and the Central Valley. President Sheley has led California State University, Stanislaus, to extraordinary accomplishments including recognition by Money magazine as the nation's top public university for assisting students in exceeding expectations. In addition, National Public Radio ranked California State University, Stanislaus, as the fifth school in the nation to enhance the upward mobility of its students.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and commending Dr. Joseph F. Sheley, President of the California State University, Stanislaus, for his numerous years of unwavering leadership, many accomplishments, and selfless service to the higher education of our community.

VICTOR VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Victor Valley High School alumni, students, and staff on the 100th anniversary of their school. This Saturday, hundreds of current and former Jackrabbits will take part in a special ceremony to commemorate this momentous occasion.

Founded as a one-room school house in 1915, Victor Valley High School has since grown to become known as the Victor Valley Union High School District. This district serves over 9,600 students and boasts Boston Red Sox owner John Henry and mixed martial arts legend Dan Henderson among its alumni.

I want to commend the Victor Valley Union High School district on this remarkable achievement. The service they provide to students in the Victor Valley is invaluable and I look forward to another 100 years of success.

TRIBUTE TO JAMIE KEYSER THOMAS—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my congressional district. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Jamie Keyser Thomas, of Sunland, California.

Jamie is currently a Program Manager of Los Angeles Community Engagement, which is part of the Citizenship division of The Walt Disney Company, where she helps produce and execute community outreach programs in the areas of creativity, compassion, and conservation in the greater Los Angeles region, particularly in the City of Burbank. In addition, Jamie runs Disney VoluntEARS, a program which provides Disneyland Resort cast members with opportunities to give back to the community through volunteer service. She

also oversees the Disney Volunteer Leadership Council. Jamie's dedicated service to Disney spans many years and this year will mark a major milestone—her 25th anniversary with the company. During her time at Disney, Jamie has worked in various divisions including Corporate Brand Management and the Disney Development Company.

Ms. Keyser Thomas has devoted considerable time and energy to serving the community through various organizations. She serves on the Board of Directors for Leadership Burbank, an organization that offers a leadership training program for individuals who reside or work in the City of Burbank, and is a Board Member of Burbank Business Partners, which aims to increase community interaction and investment in local schools. In addition, she has served on special committees for the Burbank Temporary Aid Center, the Burbank Chamber of Commerce, Special Olympics Southern California, and Meet Each Need with Dignity, a non-profit organization that offers basic human needs to individuals in the community who are living in poverty.

Jamie and her husband, Mike, live in Sunland with their two dogs. When she is not busy helping her community, Jamie enjoys the outdoors, traveling, cooking and spending time with family and friends.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Jamie Keyser Thomas, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING CORINNE M.
MOHRMANN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary member of the East Bay community, Ms. Corinne Mohrmann upon the occasion of her retirement.

Ms. Mohrmann was orphaned in early childhood and grew up in foster care, where she first learned the impact a great teacher could have on the life of a young person. After being introduced to a parish by a Catholic family she was placed with, she began helping to teach catechism as a young teenager.

At the age of sixteen, she graduated from high school and successfully negotiated her enrollment in San Jose State University, where she supported herself by working as a kindergarten assistant at Saint Elizabeth's Day Home. While she was still a minor, she went on to successfully petition to be allowed entrance to the religious order of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

She came to Oakland and the Saint Vincent Day Home in the late 1960's and with her friend, Sister Ann Maureen Murphy, began developing a vision for a safe, nurturing educational environment. With Sister Murphy, she authored a master's thesis at Pacific Oaks College that laid the foundation for the extensive restoration and development of Saint Vincent's Day Home that turned the Day Home into the incredible learning environment it is today.

This is Ms. Mohrmann's fortieth year as acting executive director of Saint Vincent's. Saint

Vincent's Day Home, which has been in operation since 1911, offers comprehensive educational programs, serves healthy meals, and provides access to health, dental, speech, and social services for toddlers and preschoolers.

Over the course of Ms. Mohrmann's forty years of leadership, Saint Vincent's Day Home has expanded to serve more than 230 children of a diverse range of working poor families each day, including the homeless, victims of abuse, and those born exposed to drugs. Throughout the years, Ms. Mohrmann has made innumerable contributions to Oakland and the Greater Bay Area and has touched tens of thousands of lives with her kindness, wisdom, and determination.

Ms. Mohrmann has frequently received honor and recognition for her work by the state and local legislative community and by the Department of Education. She was named City of Las Vegas's "Educational Mother of the Year", inducted to the Alameda County's Women's Hall of Fame in 1996, and was the recipient of the Oakland Diocese's Monsignor McCracken Award.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, Ms. Corinne Mohrmann, I salute you. I thank you for a lifetime of service and congratulate you on your many achievements. I wish you and your loved ones the very best as you enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

CELEBRATING THE STATE CHAMPION SCHECK HILLEL COMMUNITY SCHOOL MEN'S SOCCER TEAM

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Scheck Hillel Community School Men's Soccer Team on its historic 1A State Championship win on February 9, 2016. Forging past the defending state champions Maitland Orangewood Christian, the Scheck Hillel Lions were able to secure an almost perfect season with 19 wins, one tie, and no losses. It is likely the first win of its kind for a Jewish school in the U.S., and Scheck Hillel can now boast its first state championship in any sport.

After losing the championship game on the same field three years ago, this group of Lions was more determined than ever to redeem themselves. The entire student body packed the stands to support the team's final fight. With an exciting but scoreless first and second half, the players advanced to a dramatic round of penalty kicks.

After five nail-biting rounds of penalty kicks, the teams were tied. It was only after senior Lion Salo Lapco beamed a shot past the Orangewood goalie, and senior Lion goalie Alan Landau blocked the final shot from their opponents, that their fans stormed the field in celebration and the team was able to cement its victory.

It is a privilege to recognize the perseverance and dedication of this group of young men. This win is a testament to their hard work and devotion on and off the field. The true commitment of head coach Ben Magidson, and the sacrifice of each and every

player will be remembered for years to come. With this achievement, they have become an enduring source of pride for their community and the entire city. Please join me in congratulating the Scheck Hillel Community School Men's Soccer Team on its thrilling victory.

TRIBUTE TO KIMBERLY HOLLAND—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my congressional district. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Kimberly Holland, of La Crescenta, California.

For nearly three decades, Kimberly Holland has been working with the Professional Development Center of Glendale Community College, serving in the capacity of Executive Director for the past decade, and has overseen the training of employees from organizations and companies in Southern California. Over the years, the Professional Development Center has been a tremendous force in providing technical services, a quality education, and training for Southern California employees, and is recognized as one of the most innovative training agencies in California. As a testament to its success, employees who undergo training provided by the Professional Development Center currently experience an average earnings increase of \$5.40 per hour.

Ms. Holland's unparalleled leadership and steadfast commitment has immensely contributed to the many milestones the Professional Development Center has achieved. The Professional Development Center has trained 34,000 California workers and has created relationships with numerous clients that include USC Verdugo Hills Hospital, Glendale Adventist Medical Center, DreamWorks Animation, Lexus of Glendale, Whole Foods Market, and The Cheesecake Factory.

In addition to her work at the Professional Development Center, Kimberly spends time participating in local and community fundraising events. She also enjoys attending sporting events, and is a big fan of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Los Angeles Lakers.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Ms. Kimberly Holland, for her extraordinary service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO SAMTRANS ON ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the San Mateo County Transit District, known locally as SamTrans, and congratulate its Board and

everyone at the agency. SamTrans has provided important bus service throughout San Mateo County since it carried its first passengers on July 1, 1976.

SamTrans was formed through the consolidation of 11 separate city bus systems into a single countywide service. Since its beginning, SamTrans has provided bus service to several heavily populated employment centers on the San Francisco Peninsula. SamTrans also provides critical service to the rural coast of San Mateo County which is home to agricultural workers and many other residents who are dependent on the SamTrans bus system to get to work, school, and medical appointments.

SamTrans is also a leader in providing paratransit service for passengers with mobility impairments. In 1977, more than a decade before passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, SamTrans launched the Redi-Wheels program to provide on-demand, free transit service for passengers with disabilities. This innovative program now provides more than 1,000 trips per day.

In 1988, SamTrans was named the managing agency of a half-cent sales tax measure approved by San Mateo County voters for transportation projects. This sales tax was renewed in 2004 and will be in effect through 2033. Three years later, SamTrans joined with the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board to purchase the Caltrain right-of-way from San Francisco to San Jose and ensure that this regional commuter rail remained in service. SamTrans now serves as the managing agency for Caltrain which is the spine of our transit system on the Peninsula and serves over 55,000 passengers on an average weekday.

Today, SamTrans has a fleet of nearly 300 buses providing service to over 13 million riders per year. SamTrans operates on over 75 routes throughout San Mateo County, with service extended into parts of San Francisco and Palo Alto, and the District has continually improved and upgraded its service over the years to better align with demand.

My own experience with SamTrans dates back to my service on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors from 1982 to 1992. Throughout my tenure on the Board and in Congress, I'm proud to have worked closely with SamTrans to ensure residents of San Mateo County have access to safe, efficient transportation options that reduce congestion and improve mobility on the Peninsula.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House to join me in honoring SamTrans for 40 years of superb service to the people of San Mateo County.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LAVEEN
ANNUAL COMMUNITY PARADE
SPONSORED BY THE LAVEEN
LIONS CLUB

HON. RUBEN GALLEG0

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the leadership and volunteers who organize and staged the 16th Annual Laveen Community Parade.

Since its inception, the parade has been hosted annually by the Laveen Lions Club. The Laveen chapter was chartered on October

21, 1974, as a member of the largest community service organization in the world, Lions Clubs.

Lions Clubs bring together individuals devoted to making their communities a better place, regardless of race, religion, gender or language. As their motto, "We Serve," indicates, Lions Club members work tirelessly to support and assist those in need.

The 16th Annual Community Parade, which took place in February 2016, honored the agrarian heritage and diversity of the Laveen community. The parade featured local school clubs, horses and riders, community organizations and other officials and floats, including an award-winning float from the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base.

Outside of the annual parade, the Laveen Lions Club engages in a variety of community service projects. This winter, members and volunteers sent over 1,000 Christmas cards to troops in Afghanistan to honor those who serve and protect us. The Lions Club also provided Christmas Baskets full of food and Christmas gifts to thirty-five families and six senior citizens in the community. In addition, they collected and donated 2,615 pounds of food and Christmas gifts for distribution by local food banks, faith-based centers and community organizations.

The Laveen Lions Club has long worked with local elementary and charter schools to conduct a vision and hearing screening program. Across ten local schools, Lions Club volunteers have provided service to more than 3,000 kindergarten, first, second, fourth, sixth grade and special needs students.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the leadership of Jeff Sprout, this year's Laveen Lions Club Parade Chairperson, as well as the many volunteers who successfully organized and staged the 16th Annual Laveen Community Parade and who are a consistent force for good in the local community.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA A. (PAT)
ANDERSON—28TH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF
THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Patricia A. (Pat) Anderson, of La Cañada Flintridge, California.

Born in Los Angeles, Pat attended West Athens Elementary School, George Washington School and local colleges.

Pat became President/CEO of the La Cañada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce and Community Association in 2003, a position she holds today. She oversees all aspects of the chamber, including annual events such as the Fiesta Days/Memorial Day Weekend festivities and parade, the chamber's internship program, and works closely with residents, businesses and city officials on local issues. Under her stellar leadership, both the business

and residential membership expanded, the chamber's revenues grew, and she was responsible for creating new programs such as the Chamber Ambassador program. Pat's professional organizations include memberships in the Southern California Chamber of Commerce Executives, Professional Women's Networking Group, California Contract Cities Association, California Chamber of Commerce, and the Los Angeles County BizFed, of which she is a Founding Member.

The consummate volunteer, Ms. Anderson's list of volunteer activities is extensive and varied. She was a member of the Palm Crest Elementary School PTA and the La Cañada High School Drama Boosters Club, civic clubs such as the La Cañada New Members Club and the Thursday Club, the La Cañada Flintridge City Incorporation Committee and was a volunteer instructor at the Braille Institute. Also, Pat is a Founding Member and is active in the Cañada Auxiliary of Professionals, and the O. Warren Hilgren Scholarship committee, is Past President and a current Board Member of the Paradise Valley Homeowners Association, and a Director of the La Cañada Flintridge Coordinating Council. In addition, Pat is a nearly-thirty year member of the Kiwanis Club of La Cañada, and a forty-five year member of the La Cañada Congregational Church, where she has served as a Sunday School Teacher, Music Committee Member and chaired several committees. For her civic and professional accomplishments, Ms. Anderson has received the Kiwanis Club of La Cañada's La Cañadan of the Year Award, the Les Tupper Community Service Award, Business Life Magazine's Woman Achiever 2012 Award, and was named Woman of the Year for the 44th Assembly District in 2010 by then-Assemblyman Anthony Portantino.

A forty-five year resident of La Cañada Flintridge, Pat and her late husband, Rev. Philip Longfellow Anderson, were married for twenty years before his passing in 2003, and have one daughter, Katherine.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Patricia A. (Pat) Anderson, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING TROOPER SEAN
CULLEN

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and life of fallen New Jersey State Trooper Sean Cullen of the Third Congressional District, and to express my sincerest condolences to his family and loved ones he has left behind, as well as to recognize his career of public service.

Sean Cullen was a standout athlete at Cinnaminson High School and All-American wrestler at Lycoming College in Pennsylvania, where he earned a degree in criminal justice. After he graduated college, Sean pursued a career in law enforcement, eventually becoming a New Jersey State Trooper. His first police job was in Sea Isle City, where he served as a Special Officer Class II. Sean dedicated five years to the Mount Holly Police Department and then served with the Westampton

Township Police Department before joining the New Jersey State Police. Sean was known by fellow officers for his upbeat and positive spirit, and his ability to overcome any obstacle in his way.

Trooper Cullen sacrificed precious time with his fiancée and son to protect and serve those in need. He was fatally struck by an oncoming vehicle while responding to an accident.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously honored by the selfless dedication displayed by Sean Cullen. He was a true hero, who put his life in harm's way to protect and serve those in need. It is with a heavy heart that I rise before the United States House of Representatives to commemorate his career and life, and recognize the lasting legacy that he has left behind.

STEVEN LANTSBERGER RETIRES FROM THE CITY OF HESPERIA

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Steven Lantsberger who will be retiring from the City of Hesperia after 18 years of service. Mr. Lantsberger is the Director of the city's Economic Development Department.

Mr. Lantsberger has spent nearly 30 years in the fields of economic development and redevelopment. He spearheaded Hesperia's successful efforts to create an Enterprise Zone and Recycling Market Development Zone. His innovative thinking has led to the creation of thousands of jobs in northern and southern California.

Mr. Lantsberger holds numerous professional certifications, including Economic Development Finance Professional, Housing Development Finance Professional, and Real Estate Broker and Appraiser. I want to thank Mr. Lantsberger for his years of service to the City of Hesperia and its citizens. His contributions will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on the people he served. I wish him the best of luck as he enters the newest chapter of his life.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA S. PURA—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Linda S. Pura, of Los Feliz, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Born in New Jersey, Linda attended Skidmore College and New Jersey City University for her registered nursing degree and teaching credential, and California State University, Northridge, where she obtained her Master's of Public Administration Degree.

Linda's illustrious forty-two year career as a registered nurse, health care educator and nursing manager began at Bayonne Hospital in Bayonne, New Jersey. After moving to California, she was a critical care instructor for seventeen years at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, and then clinical manager of their blood donor facility, where she was responsible for blood donations and stem cell collection patient care. Linda provided, developed and coordinated educational programs and education needs assessments for over 400 primary care clinicians for the California Department of Health Care Services' Los Angeles County Cancer Detention Program, "Every Woman Counts." In addition, Mrs. Pura acted as the Consumer Representative for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) National Mammography Quality Assurance Advisory Committee, where she advised the FDA in the development of quality standards for mammography facilities and accrediting bodies, and developed procedures to monitor compliance with standards and mechanisms to investigate consumer complaints.

A tireless advocate for women's breast health, Linda co-founded the Susan G. Komen Los Angeles County affiliate, an organization that provides funding for breast cancer education and outreach, and breast health services in the Los Angeles County communities. Linda has participated in multiple aspects of the organization, including serving as Board President, Race for the Cure Chairperson, and on the Education and Grants Committees, and is currently a member of their speakers' bureau, their metastatic breast cancer committee and the Race for the Cure committee. One of Mrs. Pura's major achievements was the design and organization of breast cancer diagnostic centers funded by Susan G. Komen Los Angeles County for symptomatic women and men. For her efforts, Linda received the national organization's Jill Ireland Award for Volunteerism.

Linda and her husband, Marshall Pura, have been Los Feliz residents for almost fifty years. Married for nearly half a century, they have one daughter and two granddaughters.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Linda S. Pura, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HENRIETTA LACKS

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to celebrate Mrs. Henrietta Lacks, whose family knew her as a phenomenal woman. Decades after her death, the world now knows her phenomenal life-giving contributions.

Mrs. Lacks could hardly have known the impact her life would have. She grew up humbly in rural Virginia, moving as a young mother with her husband Day to find opportunity in Baltimore. The Lacks family continued to grow until she received her fateful diagnosis. The doctors at Johns Hopkins attempted to treat her cervical cancer, but were unable to save her life.

Of course, that is not the end of the story. In fact, her story is still being told through her

immortal cells, the first to replicate indefinitely, providing clinicians with an invaluable resource for their medical research.

In her lifetime, Henrietta Lacks never witnessed a man land on the moon. She could have hardly imagined that her cells would travel in space to help determine the effects of zero gravity.

Mrs. Lacks died decades before the discovery of AIDS. And still, her cells have contributed to treatments for those living with HIV.

That is immortality. This woman, who gave so much to her family in life, continues to give in her death.

As we celebrate her contributions, we must also acknowledge that they were not freely given. As an African-American woman of few means, she was not afforded in life the respect that she deserved. Her cells were used without her knowledge or her consent.

In fact, Henrietta Lacks' family did not know that her cells had been cultivated until researchers contacted them 25 years after her death requesting additional genetic material.

How could they have known the lengths her cells had traveled? Or the fortunes they had made?

It is tragic that the gift that Henrietta Lacks gave the world was really not a gift at all.

Still, the Lacks family continues to give. They have not shared in the riches that the HeLa cells have made possible. But they have reclaimed their privacy rights, working in cooperation with the National Institutes of Health to control access to their family's genetic code. Today, their experience informs discussions of bioethics and patient consent.

Truly, there will never be another Henrietta Lacks. This phenomenal woman left a legacy of generosity and humility in her remarkable family. I am proud to introduce a resolution today in the House of Representatives to honor Mrs. Henrietta Lacks.

This Women's History Month, I am honored to recognize Mrs. Henrietta Lacks, her life, and her remarkable place in history. On behalf of a grateful nation, thank you to the Lacks family for the countless ways you have enriched our lives.

HONORING LILLIE KAY MITCHELL

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lillie Kay Mitchell on being named the 2016 Germantown, Tennessee Lions Club Citizen of the Year. This award is indeed a fitting tribute for all the time and sacrifice that Ms. Mitchell has made on behalf of the people of Germantown and all of Shelby County, Tennessee.

After graduating from Leadership Germantown in 2004, Ms. Mitchell has become an active member of the Alumni Association, including serving as the organization's secretary in 2010. She has spearheaded multiple projects including the annual Neighborhood Association Seminar, thus putting her experience of founding the Neshoba North Neighborhood Association to practical use for the betterment of our community.

For the last 10 years, Ms. Mitchell has been a member of Germantown Public Safety Education Commission, including serving as Chair

for five years. Along with completing both her CPR and CERT training, she launched Germantown's Safety City while volunteering in that capacity. Ms. Mitchell is also an energetic leader in the annual Germantown Charity Horse Show, her church, Germantown United Methodist Church, and many more philanthropic endeavors.

Indeed, the Germantown Lions Club could not have made a better selection for their Citizen of the Year than Ms. Lillie Kay Mitchell. On behalf of Tennessee's 8th Congressional District, I would like to congratulate Ms. Mitchell and wish her the best of luck in the future.

HONORING JIM WATSON OF BEDFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOLLOWING HIS PASSING ON FEBRUARY 20, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincerest condolences and sympathy to the family of Jim Watson of Bedford, New Hampshire.

Mr. Watson served his country honorably in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He later started his own business in 1981, Watson Insurance Agency, and remained a well-known and respected businessman in New Hampshire until his retirement in 2011. Jim continued to stay engaged in causes in the community after his retirement, such as the Boy Scouts of America, and was an active member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and active in local party politics.

I know that Jim will be best remembered for his kindness and willingness to help others in the community. New Hampshire lost a true friend to the community and we will forever be grateful for his hard work and many contributions over the years.

HONORING HARRY CHARLES

HON. TOM RICE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Harry Charles.

I met Harry Charles in the mid-1980s at Trinity Episcopal Church. Harry was a gentleman, a gentle man, in every sense. Brilliant, soft-spoken, and dignified with a shock of white hair and a sparkle in his eye, I liked him instantly. He and his wife, Jane, were loving, giving people. They were very involved in the community. The best compliment I can give them, or anyone, is that they were full of God's grace. They were graceful.

Folks often came to Harry after he'd retired for legal advice. Many of those, Harry would send to me, which meant a lot to a young lawyer.

I understated to say Harry and I were friends, and he was a great influence to me. But I want to share one aspect: He came by my office one day, looked me in the eye, and asked

about my community involvement. When he deemed my answers inadequate, he said "I guess we'll have to put you to work." Over the next 20 years, Harry appointed me to a commission to study emergency services, then to 6 years on the Board of Zoning Appeals (ouch), then to 2 terms on Ocean View Foundation. Harry made sure my civic duties were fulfilled.

I may have complained once or twice along the way, but I have no doubt that the people I met, and the lessons I learned carrying out Harry's assignments vastly broadened my perspective and eventually led me to the United States Congress.

Harry will be greatly missed.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF OLIVE CECELIA BELLMORE OLDFIELD

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the birthday of Olive Cecelia Bellmore Oldfield. She will turn 100 on March 18th.

Olive was born in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan on March 18th, 1916. She was the third of four children of Jesse and Laura Trudell Bellmore. Early in her life, Olive's family relocated to Detroit, Michigan where her family ran a confectionery store.

She attended Blessed Sacrament Grade School in Detroit and went on to graduate from Visitation High School. After completion of school, she was engaged to her brother's friend, Alfred "Al" Oldfield, a new American citizen from Canada. They were married at Visitation Parish on November 16, 1935.

After World War II, Olive gave birth to four children, John, Janine, Jerome and Mary. At this time, the family decided to venture into business for themselves and began Ecko Beer Distributorship.

Olive and her late husband, Al, have 16 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Olive has spoiled each one of them with love and chocolate. She has survived breast cancer twice, both in the late 1960's and again in 2007. She was able to celebrate 59 years of marriage with her husband before his passing.

Olive is young at heart and an inspiration. She still lives alone and never misses her favorite program, "Jeopardy". She always does for others before herself, and taught her four children to do the same. She is a patriot and thankful to be an American citizen of French ancestry.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the life and achievements of Olive Cecelia Bellmore Oldfield and wishing her a happy 100th birthday.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON AFTER HER PASSING ON FEBRUARY 27, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Merrimack High School graduate

Ashley Guindon, a police officer who lost her life in the line of duty on February 27, 2016.

Ashley grew up in New Hampshire in the First Congressional District. Following in her father's footsteps, she joined the Marine Corps Reserve, winning the National Defense Service Medal and Marine Corps Reserve Medal.

Her love of public service brought her back to the nation's capital, where she gained a forensic science degree. She graduated from the Prince William County, Virginia, police academy last year and served her first day on the job on February 27th. That same night, her compassion for others drew her into a deadly situation, which cost Ashley her young life. A suspect shot two more officers and fatally wounded another victim.

Merrimack, New Hampshire, where Ashley's family still lives, mourns her loss. It takes a remarkable individual like Ashley Guindon to risk their life daily to keep us safe and protect us from harm. So let us take a moment today and pause, reflect, and celebrate the life and valor of Officer Guindon. She died trying to protect her fellow citizens and we will all miss her contributions.

CONGRATULATING REVEREND DR. JARVIS L. COLLIER

HON. KEVIN YODER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to send my congratulations to Reverend Dr. Jarvis L. Collier on his 15th Anniversary at Pleasant Green Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kansas.

I've known Reverend Collier for several years now. I met him when I was a brand new Member of Congress representing Wyandotte County in Washington.

The Reverend has always been very kind to me and has welcomed me to Pleasant Green on more than one occasion, including having my wife Brooke and I join the United Prayer Movement to serve meals on Thanksgiving.

His stated goal is "to glorify God as a yielded instrument for preaching/teaching/modeling the redemptive love of God through Jesus Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit."

I've seen how he lives out this goal firsthand. Visiting Pleasant Green Baptist Church I've seen the fruits of his labor for his congregation and community through spreading the good word, working on education initiatives and more.

His leadership is truly an asset to Wyandotte County and the greater Kansas City area.

Reverend Collier, thanks for your dedication and service these past 15 years and I look forward to celebrating many more milestones with you and the wonderful people at Pleasant Green Baptist Church.

HONORING COL. FRED VANN CHERRY

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor the life and legacy

of Col. Fred Vann Cherry, an Air Force fighter pilot who spent seven years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. Colonel Cherry passed away recently at the age of 87 while living in Maryland.

A native of Suffolk, Virginia, Colonel Cherry was born to farmers on March 24, 1928. He attended the racially segregated schools of the Jim Crow South and graduated in 1951 from Virginia Union University, a historically black college in Richmond. He then joined the Air Force.

Colonel Cherry was a Major who had served more than 100 combat missions in Korea and Vietnam when his bomber was hit by enemy fire in October 1965. He suffered significant injuries while ejecting and was captured immediately upon landing. He spent 702 days in solitary confinement and endured torture at the hands of our enemies. Colonel Cherry was the first and highest-ranking black officer to become a prisoner in Vietnam.

Colonel Cherry credited his survival to a fellow POW who, in turn, credited Colonel Cherry with his. The two wrote a book about their friendship and gave joint talks at military institutions and colleges. Colonel Cherry was also featured in a documentary narrated by Tom Hanks about Vietnam fighter pilots held as POWs.

Colonel Cherry later attended the National War College and the Defense Intelligence School in Washington. After more than 30 years of service, he retired from the Air Force in 1981 as a decorated joint staff officer assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency. He then started his own engineering company.

While too numerous to mention in their entirety, Colonel Cherry's awards and accolades include two Purple Hearts, the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars and the Air Force Cross, which recognizes "extraordinary heroism," "personal fortitude" in the face of severe enemy harassment and torture and suffering critical injuries. A scholarship in his name is given annually by the Suffolk Foundation.

Colonel Cherry has remained a dedicated father to his five children, three of which also enlisted in our Armed Forces. He died as a grandfather to 14 and a great-grandfather to six.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to acknowledge the service and sacrifice of Colonel Cherry and that of his family. I humbly express my condolences to his family and wish them peace and comfort in the days ahead.

HONORING REVEREND FRANCIS CRANDALL IN CELEBRATION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my congratulations to Reverend Francis Crandall in celebration of his reaching his 100th birthday.

As he reflects on the great memories and milestones that have highlighted the past hundred years, I know he will think fondly on all that he's accomplished and the positive impact he's had on his family and the communities he's served in New Hampshire. In addition to

his fine work in ministry, Reverend Crandall has been a staunch advocate for feeding homeless and needy children around the world, and created the International Concern for Children Foundation (ICCF) to help raise awareness and much needed funds for children at orphanages in thirteen countries.

Rev. Crandall's care for others and focus on helping those most in need has created a strong legacy that will not soon be forgotten. It is with great admiration that I congratulate him on achieving this wonderful milestone, and wish him the best in all future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANN ARBOR CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living on their 40th anniversary. The accomplishment of this long-standing non-profit agency exemplifies the importance and strength of public-private partnerships in our communities.

Founded in February of 1976, the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living has worked to improve the lives of those living with disabilities in our community. The group was launched to provide help for individuals with disabilities, by people with disabilities. It sought to move beyond the low expectations of people in the disabled community, and worked diligently to help them achieve full participation and access to opportunities that able-bodied people take for granted. At the time of its inception, it was just the fourth Center for Independent Living in the country, and the first in the State of Michigan. The Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living provides the most basic life needs to people: housing, transportation, and access to resources. Their work has now expanded to positively impact the lives of over 4,000 people in Southeast Michigan each year.

The center offers individualized counseling, advocacy efforts, skill-building classes, recreation, arts programming, and other tools that build a sense of community and belonging for all. For 40 years, the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living has held itself to the highest standards of excellence to ensure that our residents continue to have a place to turn for support in good times and in bad times.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living on their 40th Anniversary and to wish them many more years of continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PAISANO

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 35th anniversary of The

Paisano, the independent student newspaper at the University of San Antonio (UTSA). For three and a half decades, dedicated, talented students have run every aspect of the paper's publication. From reporting, to editing, to managing the paper's budget, it's the driven young people at UTSA who have made The Paisano's success over the years possible.

Each week, 7,000 copies of The Paisano circulate on campus, expanding students' horizons, challenging their thinking, and enriching campus life. Thanks to the Paisano, learning at UTSA doesn't end when students leave the classroom.

A vibrant, free press plays a vital role in American society, and The Paisano fosters a welcoming community where the next generation of journalists can cut their teeth and hone their craft. Enthusiasm and a desire to learn are the only prerequisites for joining the paper's staff. Even for alumni of The Paisano's team who pursue careers in fields other than journalism, the lessons in leadership, teamwork, and entrepreneurship learned during their time with the paper serve them well.

I applaud the members of The Paisano's staff, past and present. Their legacy lives on at UTSA, and will continue to do so for years to come as future classes take up the torch—and pen—at The Paisano.

HONORING KEITH BRYAR JR. OF LACONIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOLLOWING HIS PASSING ON FEBRUARY 20, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincerest condolences and sympathy to the family of Keith Bryar of Moultonborough, New Hampshire.

Mr. Bryar was an active member of the Lakes Region community where he was born and raised. After spending time in Alaska to gain experience in the construction industry, he returned to New Hampshire to start his own business, Bryar Enterprises, which he owned and operated for thirty years. During this time he was an active member of the community and became known for his professionalism and strong work ethic.

Keith's other passion in life, following his great love for his family, was his involvement in racing sled dogs, a tradition he carried on from his parents. His love of sled dogs and racing them pushed him to compete across the U.S. and Canada, earning him many titles along the way and the respect of many involved in the sport.

New Hampshire and the Lakes Region lost a true friend, and we will forever be grateful for his hard work and commitment to the community he held so dear.

HONORING JACK PLUCKHAHN

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Frederick John Pluckhahn.

Jack was a prominent and instrumental leader in the consumer electronics industry and he will be dearly missed by his many colleagues and friends across the nation.

As a young man, Jack earned a Bachelor's of Science at the University of Wisconsin—Madison and served in the United States Navy from 1955 to 1957. After beginning his entrepreneurial career in Minneapolis, Minnesota as a buyer for Dayton's Department Store, he relocated with his family in 1968 to New Jersey to join Matsushita Electric Industrial Corporation, known today as Panasonic Corporation. During his tenure at Panasonic, he served as Vice President of the Southern Group of Matsushita Electric Corporation of America (MECA) from 1972 to 1982 before becoming President of MECA's Quasar Division in Chicago, Illinois. From 1989 to 1994, as Vice President of MECA, he was responsible for operations and headquarters functions at the company.

From 1986 to 1994, Jack volunteered for several leadership positions with the Consumer Electronics Group, known today as the Consumer Technology Association. As Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Video Chair, he played a key role in the nation's switch to digital and high-definition television, and in the words of CTA President Gary Shapiro, "Television as we know it today . . . would not be possible without the contributions of Jack and his colleagues."

In addition to his accomplishments in the consumer electronics industry, Jack was actively involved in his community, both as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for the Planning Commission in Morgan County, Georgia and as the County's Habitat for Humanity Executive Director from 1996 to 2008. It was his honor to carry the Olympic Torch for the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996.

Jack passed away on February 11, 2016 from Parkinson's disease and is survived by Nancy, his wife of fifty-six years, and their children: Susan and Felix Vizurraga, Jill and Mat Morgan, Scott Pluckhahn and Keith Crosby, Thomas Pluckhahn and Becky Zarger, and Michael Pluckhahn. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.

IN MEMORY OF BRIGADIER
GENERAL RUFUS C. LAZZELL

HON. THOMAS J. ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rufus C. Lazzell, retired Brigadier General and former mayor of Punta Gorda, Florida, who sadly passed away on Saturday, March 12, 2016 at the age of 86.

Rufus Lazzell served as an officer in the United States Army for thirty years during which time he fought and commanded valiantly in two of our nation's wars, Korea and Vietnam. He commanded the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment (Ranger) during the first battle of Prek Klok in 1967 and then went on to hold multiple staff positions throughout the Army, including working for the Army Chief of Staff. He retired from military service in 1981, earning the rank of Brigadier General. His service awards include: the Army Distinguished Service Medal, two awards of the Sil-

ver Star for gallantry in combat, three awards of the Legion of Merit, three awards of the Bronze Star Medal (including one for valor), Defense Superior Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, four awards of the Air Medal, two awards of the Army Commendation Medal and the Purple Heart.

Although retired from military service, Rufus continued to serve the people of the United States. He served on the Punta Gorda City Council for eight years including four years as mayor. He was a strong supporter of preserving the Charlotte County Court House, a founding member of the Military Heritage Museum, was the museum's first inductee on their "Wall of Warrior", and was the president of the Cultural Center of Charlotte County. Although he held high positions of power, Rufus' magnanimous character is to be admired and was highlighted when he worked as a sales clerk in a local hardware store because he "wanted to learn the hardware business and find out how to fix things."

Rufus was more than a pillar in the community, he was an intricate member of the community's foundation. Rufus is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Jo Jac, daughters Victoria and Linda, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I speak for all of Charlotte County in saying that our thoughts and prayers are with Brigadier General Lazzell's family, as well as his friends, co-workers and the entire community as they mourn his passing. He will be missed.

RECOGNIZING NACDS RxIMPACT DAY

HON. DAVID LOESACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. LOESACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Eighth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. This is a special day where we recognize pharmacy's contribution to the American healthcare system. This year's event, organized by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, takes place on March 16–17. Nearly 400 individuals from the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy association representatives and pharmacy company leaders—will visit Capitol Hill. They will share their views with Congress about the importance of supporting legislation that protects access to community and neighborhood pharmacies and that utilizes pharmacists to improve the quality and reduce the costs of providing healthcare.

Advocates from over 40 states have travelled to Washington to talk about the pharmacy community's contributions in over 40,000 community pharmacies nationwide. These important healthcare providers are here to educate Congress about the value of pharmacy and the important access provided by community pharmacies in the nation's healthcare delivery system. And just as these providers travelled to meet with us, Members of Congress and their staff have toured retail chain pharmacies in our own communities more than 400 times since 2009.

Patients have always relied on their local pharmacist to meet their healthcare needs.

The local pharmacist is a trusted, highly accessible healthcare provider deeply committed to providing the highest quality care in the most efficient manner possible.

As demand for healthcare services continues to grow, pharmacists have expanded their role in healthcare delivery, partnering with physicians, nurses and other healthcare providers to meet their patients' needs. Innovative services provided by pharmacists do even more to improve patient healthcare. Pharmacists are highly valued by those that rely on them most—those in rural and underserved areas, as well as older Americans, and those struggling to manage chronic diseases. Pharmacy services improve patients' quality of life as well as healthcare affordability. By helping patients take their medications effectively and providing preventive services, pharmacists help avoid more costly forms of care. Pharmacists also help patients identify strategies to save money, such as through better understanding of their pharmacy benefits, using generic medications, and obtaining 90-day supplies of prescription drugs from local pharmacies.

Pharmacists are the nation's most accessible healthcare providers. In many communities, especially in rural areas, the local pharmacist is a patient's most direct link to healthcare. Eighty-six percent of Americans reside within a five-mile radius of a community pharmacy. Pharmacists are one of our nation's most trusted healthcare professionals. Utilizing their specialized education, pharmacists play a major role in medication therapy management, disease-state management, immunizations, healthcare screenings, and other healthcare services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall healthcare costs. Pharmacists are also expanding their role into new models of care based on quality of services and outcomes, such as accountable care organizations (ACOs) and medical homes.

The pharmacy advocates of NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill are promoting legislation, H.R. 592/S. 314, the Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act, to allow Medicare Part B to utilize pharmacists to their full capability by providing underserved beneficiaries with services, subject to state scope of practice laws. They are also working to ensure that the TRICARE pharmacy program keeps prescription copays affordable for beneficiaries as well as preserving their ability to choose to fill their prescriptions at their community pharmacy. They also are promoting measures, such as H.R. 793/S. 1190, the Ensuring Seniors Access to Local Pharmacies Act of 2015 to guarantee Medicare Part D access and transparency.

I believe Congress should look at every opportunity to make sure that pharmacists are allowed to utilize their training to the fullest to provide the services that can improve care, increase access and lower costs. In recognition of the Eighth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill, I would like to congratulate pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, and the entire pharmacy community represented by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, for their contributions to the health and wellness of the American people.

IN HONOR OF MR. MARTY McVEY

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor a respected business and community leader, Marty McVey.

Mr. McVey proudly served the American people for over four years, from 2011 to 2015. In 2011, he was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve as a Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD). USAID plays a critical role in our nation's efforts to stabilize regions and build responsive local governance. The agency addresses many of the same problems as military interventions, but uses a different set of tools.

Mr. McVey's responsibilities with the agency included providing guidance to the federal government regarding investments in training, research, and technology transfer to developing countries. As part of these responsibilities, Mr. McVey served as Chairman for the Haitian Reconstruction Task Force, as well as Chairman of the BIFAD Budget Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of a friend who has served our President and our country well, the Honorable Marty McVey.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED**MARCH 16**

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 2658, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, S. 2644, to reauthorize the Federal Communications Commission for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, and a routine list in the Coast Guard.

SR-253

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the 2016 Water Resources Development Act, focusing on policies and projects.

SD-406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 1455, to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, S. 2256, to establish programs for health care provider training in Federal health care and medical facilities, to establish Federal co-prescribing guidelines, to establish a grant program with respect to naloxone, S. 480, to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 3990 of the Public Health Service Act, an original bill entitled, "Mental Health Reform Act of 2016", and an original bill entitled, "Plan of Safe Care Improvement Act".

SD-106

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest

To hold hearings to examine the impact of immigration on United States workers.

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

SD-G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Guard and Reserve.

SD-192

2 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine Department of Homeland Security management and acquisition reform.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine preventing a fiscal crisis in America, focusing on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Nuclear Security Administration.

SD-138

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Airland

To hold hearings to examine Army Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle and Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft Enterprises in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold closed hearings to examine the Department of Defense's global counterterrorism strategy.

SVC-217

MARCH 17

9 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold hearings to examine agency use of deference.

SD-342

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

9:45 a.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine sudden price spikes in decades-old Rx drugs.

SD-562

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Labor.

SD-138

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine HealthCare.gov, focusing on a review of operations and enrollment.

SD-215

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the Administration's nuclear agenda.

SD-419

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, S. 2613, to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, S. 2614, to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmman, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

SD-226

2 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

3 p.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on National Parks

To hold hearings to examine S. 2177 and H.R. 959, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the Medgar Evers House, located in Jackson, Mississippi, S. 651 and H.R. 1289, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain land in Martinez, California,

for inclusion in the John Muir National Historic Site, H.R. 1949, to provide for the consideration and submission of site and design proposals for the National Liberty Memorial approved for establishment in the District of Columbia, S. 1329 and H.R. 2288, bills to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, H.R. 2880, to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, S. 1930 and H.R. 3371, bills to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, S. 119, to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability, S. 718, to modify the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield in the Commonwealth of Virginia, S. 770, to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, S. 1577, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of East Rosebud Creek in Carbon County, Montana, as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 1943, to modify the boundary of the Shiloh National Military Park located in the State of Tennessee and Mississippi, to establish Parker's Crossroads Battlefield as an affiliated area of the National Park System, S. 1975, to establish the Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System, S. 1982, to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance, S. 1993, to establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in the United States in national service positions to protect, restore, and enhance the great

outdoors of the United States, S. 2039, to designate the mountain at the Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming, as Devils Tower, S. 2061, to designate a National Memorial to Fallen Educators at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas, S. 2309, to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the U.S. Civil Rights Network, S. 2608, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to place signage on Federal land along the trail known as the "American Discovery Trail", S. 2620, to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, S. 2628, to authorize the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.

SD-366

APRIL 5

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the effects of consumer finance regulations.

SD-538

APRIL 6

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

APRIL 7

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Business meeting to consider the nominations of Jay Neal Lerner, of Illinois, to be Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and Amias Moore Gerety, of Connecticut,

to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Semi-Annual Report to Congress.

SD-538

APRIL 13

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

APRIL 14

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.

SD-538

APRIL 20

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on "Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands."

SD-628

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1445–S1474

Measures Introduced: Six bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2671–2676, S. Res. 398, and S. Con. Res. 33. **Page S1463**

Measures Reported:

S. 742, to appropriately limit the authority to award bonuses to employees, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–226)

S. 1638, to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress information on the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation project in the National Capital Region, with amendments. (S. Rept. No. 114–227)

S. 2055, to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Page S1463**

Measures Passed:

National Speech and Debate Education Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 398, designating March 15, 2016, as “National Speech and Debate Education Day”. **Page S1469**

House Messages:

National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act: Senate began consideration of the House message to accompany S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, taking action on the following motions proposed thereto: **Pages S1458–60**

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the House amendment to the bill with McConnell (for Roberts) Amendment No. 3450 (to the House amendment to the bill), in the nature of a substitute. **Page S1458**

McConnell motion to refer the bill to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. **Page S1458**

A motion was entered to close further debate on McConnell motion to concur in the House amendment to the bill with McConnell (for Roberts) Amendment No. 3450 (to the House amendment to the bill) (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Wednesday, March 16, 2016. **Page S1458**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the House message to accompany the bill at 2:15 p.m., on Tuesday, March 15, 2016. **Page S1469**

Appointments:

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, pursuant to Public Law 105–292, as amended by Public Law 106–55, Public Law 107–228, and Public Law 112–75, appointed the following individual to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Ambassador Jackie Wolcott of Virginia. **Page S1469**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 49 yeas to 40 nays (Vote No. EX. 36), John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education. **Pages S1457, S1474**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

11 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.
18 Army nominations in the rank of general.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy. **Pages S1473–74**

Messages from the House: **Page S1462**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1462–63**

Additional Cosponsors: Pages S1463–64
Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: Pages S1464–67
Additional Statements: Pages S1461–62
Amendments Submitted: Pages S1467–69
Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—36) Page S1457
Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m. and adjourned at 7:52 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday,

March 15, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1473.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 10 public bills, H.R. 4729–4738; and 5 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 124; and H. Res. 638–639, 641–642, were introduced. Pages H1344–45

Additional Cosponsors: Pages H1345–46

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2745, to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority (H. Rept. 114–449);

H.R. 2273, to amend the Colorado River Storage Project Act to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir, with amendments (H. Rept. 114–450);

H.R. 4427, to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–451);

H.R. 2984, to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review (H. Rept. 114–452); and

H. Res. 640, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility

steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy (H. Rept. 114–453). Page H1344

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Smith (NE) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. Page H1303

Recess: The House recessed at 12:01 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. Page H1303

Recess: The House recessed at 2:06 p.m. and reconvened at 3:06 p.m. Page H1304

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Fair RATES Act: H.R. 2984, to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review; Pages H1304–05

Energy Efficient Government Technology Act: H.R. 1268, amended, to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies; Pages H1305–07

Amending section 203 of the Federal Power Act: H.R. 4427, amended, to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; Pages H1307–08

Reinstating and extending the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam: H.R. 2080, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam; Pages H1308–09

Extending the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project: H.R. 4411, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; Page H1311

Extending the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project: H.R. 4412, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; **Pages H1311–12**

Expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed: H. Con. Res. 121, amended, expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 393 yeas to 3 nays, Roll No. 113; **Pages H1312–14, H1326–27**

Expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide": H. Con. Res. 75, amended, expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide", by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 393 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 112; **Pages H1314–17 H1325–26**

Amend the title so as to read: "Expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide." **Page H1326**

Directing the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization: S. 2426, to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 381 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 111; and **Pages H1317–20, H1324–25**

Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016: H.R. 4721, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund. **Pages H1320–24**

Recess: The House recessed at 5:22 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m. **Page H1324**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Extending the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam: H.R. 2081, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam; **Page H1309**

Extending the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project: H.R. 3447, amended, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; **Page H1309**

Extending the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project: H.R. 4416, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; and **Page H1310**

Extending the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project: H.R. 4434, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project. **Page H1310**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H1304.

Senate Referral: S. 524 was held at the desk.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yeas-and-nays votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1324–25, H1325–26, and H1326–27. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a budget hearing on the Office of Personnel Management. Testimony was heard from Beth F. Cobert, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 2666, the “No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act”; and H.R. 4725, the “Common Sense Savings Act of 2016”.

SENSE ACT; SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3797, the “SENSE Act”; and H.R. 4596, the “Small Business Broadband Deployment Act”. The committee granted, by record vote of 6–4, a structured rule for H.R. 4596. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only the further amendment printed in part A of the Rules Committee report, if offered by the Member designated in the report. The amendment shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendment printed in part A of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. The rule also granted a structured rule for H.R. 3797. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in part B of the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in part B of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without in-

structions. Testimony was heard from Representatives Latta, Pallone, and Rothfus.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY,
MARCH 15, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the United States Agency for International Development, 2:30 p.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol, 3 p.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, to hold hearings to examine the current state of readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 10 a.m., SR–222.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SH–216.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Matthew Rhett Jeppson, of Florida, to be Director of the Mint, Department of the Treasury, and Lisa M. Fairfax, of Maryland, and Hester Maria Peirce, of Ohio, both to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine the future of self-driving cars, 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the presidential memorandum issued on November 3, 2015 entitled, “Mitigating Impacts on Natural Resources from Development and Encouraging Related Private Investment.”, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine Ukrainian reforms two years after the Maidan Revolution and the Russian invasion, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the security of United States visa programs, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine late-term abortion, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs: to hold hearings to examine pending calendar business, 2:15 p.m., SR–418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research; and Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture, hearing entitled “Defending American Agriculture Against Foreign Pests and Diseases”, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Defense, hearing entitled “Members’ Day”, 9 a.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 9:30 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on U.S. Secret Service, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, budget hearing on the Department of Labor, 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, 10:15 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on Department of Energy, Environmental Management, 10:30 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, budget hearing on Department of Treasury International Programs, 10:30 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, budget hearing on the Federal Communications Commission, 2 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, oversight hearing on Office of Inspector General, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled “The U.S. Transportation Command Fiscal Year 2017 Readiness Posture”, 10:15 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for National Security Space”, 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services”, 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 2666, the “No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act”; and H.R. 4725, the “Common Sense Savings Act of 2016” (continued), 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Review of the FY 2017 Foreign Assistance Budget: Aligning Interests, Ensuring Effectiveness and Transparency”, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, hearing entitled “Trade with Cuba: Growth and Opportunities”, 1:30 p.m., 1334 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled “U.S.-India Relations: Democratic Partners of Economic Opportunity”, 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats, hearing entitled “U.S. Policy Toward National Self-Determination Movements”, 2:30 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, hearing entitled “State of Emergency: The Disaster of Cutting Preparedness Grants”, 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Task Force on Executive Overreach, hearing entitled “Executive Overreach in Domestic Affairs Part I—Health Care and Immigration”, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, hearing entitled “The Chevron Doctrine: Constitutional and Statutory Questions in Judicial Deference to Agencies”, 1:30 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 87, the “Shiloh National Military Park Boundary Adjustment and Parker’s Crossroads Battlefield Designation Act”; H.R. 295, to reauthorize the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Historic Preservation program; H.R. 329, the “Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Consolidation Act of 2015”; H.R. 496, the “Alabama Hills National Scenic Area Establishment Act”; H.R. 1621, to modify the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and for other purposes; H.R. 1838, the “Clear Creek National Recreation Area and Conservation Act”; H.R. 2009, the “Pascua Yaqui Tribe Land Conveyance Act of 2015”; H.R. 2733, the “Nevada Native Nations Land Act”; H.R. 3070, the “EEZ Clarification Act”; H.R. 3211, to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon; H.R. 3826, the “Mount Hood Cooper Spur Land Exchange Clarification Act”; H.R. 4245, to exempt importation and exportation of sea urchins and sea cucumbers from licensing requirements under the Endangered Species Act of 1973; H.R. 4579, the “Utah Test and Training Range Encroachment Prevention and Temporary Closure Act”; and H.R. 4680, to prepare the National Park Service for its Centennial in 2016 and for a second century of promoting and protecting the natural, historic, and cultural resources of our National Parks for the enjoyment of present and future generations, and for other purposes, 4 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Examining Federal Administration of the Safe Drinking Water Act in Flint, Michigan—Part II”, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled “Accountability and Transparency Reform at the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs”, 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing entitled “Racing to Regulate: EPA’s Latest Overreach on Amateur Drivers”, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation,

hearing entitled “The President’s Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Programs”, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs; and Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, joint hearing entitled “Twenty Five Years After the Persian Gulf War: An Assessment of VA’s Disability Claim Process with Respect to Gulf War Illness”, 10:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of March 15 through March 18, 2016

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, Senate will continue consideration of the House message to accompany S. 764, National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Appropriations: March 15, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the United States Agency for International Development, 2:30 p.m., SD-124.

March 15, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol, 3 p.m., SD-192.

March 16, Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Guard and Reserve, 10:30 a.m., SD-192.

March 16, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Nuclear Security Administration, 2:30 p.m., SD-138.

March 17, Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Labor, 10 a.m., SD-138.

Committee on Armed Services: March 15, Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, to hold hearings to examine the current state of readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 10 a.m., SR-222.

March 15, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SH-216.

March 16, Subcommittee on Airland, to hold hearings to examine Army Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle and Air

Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft Enterprises in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR-222.

March 16, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, to hold closed hearings to examine the Department of Defense’s global counterterrorism strategy, 2:30 p.m., SVC-217.

March 17, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD-G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: March 15, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Matthew Rhett Jeppson, of Florida, to be Director of the Mint, Department of the Treasury, and Lisa M. Fairfax, of Maryland, and Hester Maria Peirce, of Ohio, both to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission, 10 a.m., SD-538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: March 15, to hold hearings to examine the future of self-driving cars, 2:30 p.m., SR-253.

March 16, Full Committee, business meeting to consider S. 2658, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, S. 2644, to reauthorize the Federal Communications Commission for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, and a routine list in the Coast Guard, 10 a.m., SR-253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: March 15, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the presidential memorandum issued on November 3, 2015 entitled, “Mitigating Impacts on Natural Resources from Development and Encouraging Related Private Investment.”, 10 a.m., SD-366.

March 17, Subcommittee on National Parks, to hold hearings to examine S. 2177 and H.R. 959, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the Medgar Evers House, located in Jackson, Mississippi, S. 651 and H.R. 1289, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain land in Martinez, California, for inclusion in the John Muir National Historic Site, H.R. 1949, to provide for the consideration and submission of site and design proposals for the National Liberty Memorial approved for establishment in the District of Columbia, S. 1329 and H.R. 2288, bills to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, H.R. 2880, to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, S. 1930 and H.R. 3371, bills to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, S. 119, to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability, S. 718, to modify the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield in the Commonwealth of Virginia, S. 770, to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was

conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, S. 1577, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of East Rosebud Creek in Carbon County, Montana, as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 1943, to modify the boundary of the Shiloh National Military Park located in the State of Tennessee and Mississippi, to establish Parker's Crossroads Battlefield as an affiliated area of the National Park System, S. 1975, to establish the Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System, S. 1982, to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance, S. 1993, to establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in the United States in national service positions to protect, restore, and enhance the great outdoors of the United States, S. 2039, to designate the mountain at the Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming, as Devils Tower, S. 2061, to designate a National Memorial to Fallen Educators at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas, S. 2309, to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the U.S. Civil Rights Network, S. 2608, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to place signage on Federal land along the trail known as the "American Discovery Trail", S. 2620, to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, S. 2628, to authorize the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, 3 p.m., SD-366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: March 16, to hold hearings to examine the 2016 Water Resources Development Act, focusing on policies and projects, 10 a.m., SD-406.

Committee on Finance: March 17, to hold hearings to examine HealthCare.gov, focusing on a review of operations and enrollment, 10 a.m., SD-215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: March 15, to hold hearings to examine Ukrainian reforms two years after the Maidan Revolution and the Russian invasion, 10 a.m., SD-419.

March 17, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the Administration's nuclear agenda, 10 a.m., SD-419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: March 16, business meeting to consider S. 1455, to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, S. 2256, to establish programs for health care provider training in Federal health care and medical facilities, to establish Federal co-prescribing guidelines, to establish a grant program with respect to naloxone, S. 480, to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 399O of the Public Health Service Act, an original bill entitled, "Mental Health Reform Act of 2016", and an original bill entitled, "Plan of Safe Care Improvement Act", 10 a.m., SD-106.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: March 15, to hold hearings to examine the security of United States visa programs, 10 a.m., SD-342.

March 16, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine Department of Homeland Security management and acquisition reform, 2 p.m., SD-342.

March 17, Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine agency use of deference, 9 a.m., SD-342.

Committee on the Judiciary: March 15, to hold hearings to examine late-term abortion, 10 a.m., SD-226.

March 16, Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, to hold hearings to examine the impact of immigration on United States workers, 10 a.m., SD-226.

March 16, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine preventing a fiscal crisis in America, focusing on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, 2 p.m., SD-226.

March 17, Full Committee, business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, S. 2613, to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, S. 2614, to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmman, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii, 10 a.m., SD-226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: March 15, to hold hearings to examine pending calendar business, 2:15 p.m., SR-418.

March 16, Full Committee, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations, 10 a.m., SD-G50.

Select Committee on Intelligence: March 15, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH-219.

March 17, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH-219.

Special Committee on Aging: March 17, to hold hearings to examine sudden price spikes in decades-old Rx drugs, 9:45 a.m., SD-562.

House Committees

Committee on Agriculture, March 17, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Examining USDA Organization and Program Administration—Part I", 1 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

March 18, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Examining USDA Organization and Program Administration—Part II", 9 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, March 16, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget

hearing on the National Park Service, 9:30 a.m., B-308 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of Agriculture, Research, Education, and Economics, 10 a.m., 2362-A Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, budget hearing on the Department of the Treasury, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on the Federal Emergency Management Agency, 10 a.m., 2362-B Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, budget hearing on the National Institutes of Health, 10 a.m., 2358-C Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the National Science Foundation, 10:30 a.m., H-309 Capitol.

March 16, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Indian Affairs; and oversight hearing on Bureau of Indian Education Schools, 1 p.m., B-308 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, budget hearing on U.S. Agency for International Development, 1 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing for American Indian and Alaska Native public and outside witnesses, 9 a.m., B-308 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Defense, oversight hearing on U.S. Central Command, 10 a.m., H-140 Capitol. This hearing will be closed.

March 17, Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of Agriculture, Farm and Foreign Agriculture Service, 10:30 a.m., 2362-A Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing for American Indian and Alaska Native public and outside witnesses, 1 p.m., B-308 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing for American Indian and Alaska Native public and outside witnesses, 9 a.m., B-308 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing for American Indian and Alaska Native public and outside witnesses, 1 p.m., B-308 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, March 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled "The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Military Departments", 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, hearing entitled "Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for U.S. Cyber Command: Preparing for Operations in the Cyber Domain", 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled "Fiscal Year 2017 Army and Air Force Rotorcraft Modernization Programs", 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled "Evaluating DOD Investments: Case Studies in Afghanistan Initiatives and U.S. Weapons Sustainment", 4:30 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled "The Department of the Navy 2017 Operation and Maintenance Budget Request and Readiness Posture", 9:30 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, March 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Department of Labor", 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, March 16, Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, hearing entitled "Disrupter Series: Digital Currency and Block Chain Technology", 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled "Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015: Examining Implementation of Medicare Payment Reforms", 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled "Privatizing the Internet Assigned Number Authority", 10:15 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, March 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled "The Semi-Annual Report of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection", 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled "The FDIC's Targeting of Refund Anticipation Loans", 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 16, Full Committee, markup on H. Res. 343, expressing concern regarding persistent and credible reports of systematic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China, including from large numbers of Falun Gong practitioners and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups; and H.R. 4678, to prohibit modification, abrogation, abandonment, or other related actions with respect to United States jurisdiction and control over United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, without congressional action, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, March 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled "DHS in Today's Dangerous World: Examining the Department's Budget and Readiness to Counter Homeland Threats", 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on House Administration, March 16, Full Committee, markup on a resolution to amend the Committee regulations collectively known as the Guide to Outfitting and Maintaining an Office of the U.S. House of Representatives; a resolution to approve regulations pursuant to H. Res. 5 regarding Congressional Member Organizations; a resolution to amend the Committee regulations

collectively known as the Members' Congressional Handbook; and a resolution to amend the Committee regulations collectively known as the Committee Handbook, 10:30 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, March 16, Full Committee, markup on the "Refugee Program Integrity Restoration Act of 2016", 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, March 16, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 87, the "Shiloh National Military Park Boundary Adjustment and Parker's Crossroads Battlefield Designation Act"; H.R. 295, to reauthorize the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Historic Preservation program; H.R. 329, the "Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Consolidation Act of 2015"; H.R. 496, the "Alabama Hills National Scenic Area Establishment Act"; H.R. 1621, to modify the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and for other purposes; H.R. 1838, the "Clear Creek National Recreation Area and Conservation Act"; H.R. 2009, the "Pascua Yaqui Tribe Land Conveyance Act of 2015"; H.R. 2733, the "Nevada Native Nations Land Act"; H.R. 3070, the "EEZ Clarification Act"; H.R. 3211, to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon; H.R. 3826, the "Mount Hood Cooper Spur Land Exchange Clarification Act"; H.R. 4245, to exempt importation and exportation of sea urchins and sea cucumbers from licensing requirements under the Endangered Species Act of 1973; H.R. 4579, the "Utah Test and Training Range Encroachment Prevention and Temporary Closure Act"; and H.R. 4680, to prepare the National Park Service for its Centennial in 2016 and for a second century of promoting and protecting the natural, historic, and cultural resources of our National Parks for the enjoyment of present and future generations, and for other purposes (continued), 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

March 17, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled "Implementation of the Department of the Interior's Law Enforcement Records System", 9:30 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, March 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Rebuilding Afghanistan: Oversight of Defense Department Infrastructure Projects", 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Information Technology, hearing entitled "VA Cybersecurity and IT Oversight", 2 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on the Interior; and Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules, joint hearing entitled "Examining the Renewable Fuel Standard", 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

March 17, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Examining Federal Administration of the Safe Drinking Water Act in Flint, Michigan—Part III", 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, March 16, Full Committee, markup and hearing on a resolution authorizing the Speaker to

appear as *amicus curiae* on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674, 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, March 16, Subcommittee on Research and Technology, hearing entitled "An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Institute of Standards and Technology for Fiscal Year 2017", 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

March 16, Subcommittee on Environment, hearing entitled "An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for Fiscal Year 2017", 2 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Space, hearing entitled "An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for Fiscal Year 2017", 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, March 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled "SBA Management and Performance Challenges: The Inspector General's Perspective", 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

March 17, Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Regulations, hearing entitled "Risky Business: Effects of New Joint Employer Standards for Small Firms", 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs March 16, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity; and Subcommittee on Health, hearing on draft legislation to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire and retain physicians and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, March 16, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled "Preserving and Strengthening Medicare", 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

March 16, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 4472, the "Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act"; H.R. 4722, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require inclusion of the taxpayer's social security number to claim the refundable portion of the child tax credit; H.R. 4723, the "Protecting Taxpayers by Recovering Improper Obamacare Subsidy Overpayments Act"; and H.R. 4724, the "Reducing Duplicative and Ineffective Federal Funding Act", 3 p.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, March 16, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, hearing on FBI FY 2017 Budget, 2 p.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

March 17, Subcommittee on NSA and Cybersecurity, hearing on NSA FY 2017 Budget, 9 a.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

Joint Meetings

Joint Hearing: March 16, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 15

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 15

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m.

At 2:15 p.m., Senate will continue consideration of the House message to accompany S. 764, National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act.

(Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of H.R. 3797—SENSE Act (Subject to a Rule).

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