

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 259, on the nomination of Allison Eid, of Colorado, to be U.S. circuit judge for the Tenth Circuit. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 260, on the motion to invoke cloture on Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. circuit judge for the Third Circuit. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 261, on the nomination of Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. circuit judge for the Third Circuit. Had I been present, I would have voted nay. •

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, earlier today, on rollcall vote No. 260, the motion to invoke cloture on Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. circuit judge for the Third District, I voted yea when I had intended to vote nay.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17-22, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Qatar for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$1.1 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER, Lieutenant
General, USA, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-22

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) Of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Qatar

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$ 0 billion.
Other \$ 1.1 billion.
TOTAL \$ 1.1 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None

Non-MDE: Design and construction services, new parking/loading ramps, hot cargo pads, taxiways, hangars, back shops, alert facilities, weapons storage areas, hardened shelters, squadron operations facilities, maintenance facilities, training facilities, information technology support and cyber facilities, force protection support facilities, squadron operations facilities, other F-15QA related support structures, construction/facilities/design services, cybersecurity services, mission critical computer resources, support services, force protection services, and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (X7-D-QAL).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any:

Air Force: QA-D-SAC, QA-D-TAH, QA-D-YAB.

Navy: QA-P-AAG, QA-P-AAE, QA-P-AAH, QA-P-LAC, QA-P-LAE.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: November 1, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Qatar—F-15QA Construction, Cybersecurity, and Force Protection Infrastructure

The Government of Qatar has requested support of its F-15QA multi-role fighter aircraft program to include design and construction services, new parking/loading ramps, hot cargo pads, taxiways, hangars, back shops, alert facilities, weapons storage areas, hardened shelters, squadron operations facilities, maintenance facilities, training facilities, information technology support and cyber facilities, force protection support facilities, squadron operations facilities, other F-15QA related support structures, construction/facilities/design services, cybersecurity services, mission critical computer resources, support services, force protection services, and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated cost is \$1.1 billion.

This proposed sale supports the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States. Qatar is an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Persian Gulf region. Our mutual defense interests anchor our relationship and the Qatar Emiri Air Force (QEAF) plays a predominant role in Qatar's defense.

The proposed sale improves Qatar's capability to operate and sustain its F-15QA aircraft. A robust construction, cybersecurity, and force protection infrastructure is vital to ensuring the QEAF partners can utilize the F-15QA aircraft to its full potential. Qatar will have no difficulty absorbing this support into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this construction, cybersecurity, and force protection infrastructure will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor for construction, cybersecurity, and force protection infrastructure will be determined through competition. The purchaser typically requests off-sets. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor.

Implementation of the construction, cybersecurity, and force protection aspects of this notification include the establishment of a construction office in Doha with as many as ten (10) U.S. Government civilians which will adjust in size as case workload varies. Anticipated contractor footprint for this effort is approximately fifteen (15) to fifty (50) personnel, which may vary based on phases of construction and establishment of required services.

There will be no adverse impact to U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of the article, "More ACA Plans to Come With No Premiums in 2018," by Anna Wilde Mathews and Christopher Weaver that was published in the Wall Street Journal on October 27, 2017.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MORE ACA PLANS TO COME WITH NO PREMIUMS IN 2018

Insurers selling Affordable Care Act plans have a compelling new pitch: free health insurance.

When sales of plans on the law's exchanges begin Nov. 1, a growing number of consumers around the country will be able to get coverage for 2018 without paying any monthly premium, according to health insurers and an analysis of newly available federal data.

In nearly all of the 2,722 counties included in the data, some consumers will be able to obtain free health insurance because they qualify for larger federal premium subsidies that cover the full cost of a plan, according to the new analysis.

The growing availability of no-premium plans is a side effect of a decision by President Donald Trump's administration to end federal payments that are used to reduce out-of-pocket costs, such as deductibles, for low-income enrollees. The administration didn't halt—and indirectly bolstered—the federal subsidies that help consumers with their insurance premiums.

The new analysis doesn't project exactly how many consumers could be eligible for the no-premium plans, a figure that depends on variables including people's income, household size, age, location and access to other types of health coverage.

In the coming weeks, insurers are gearing up to promote the no-premium option. Amid uncertainty about the future of the 2010 health law, known as Obamacare, many insurers have pulled back from the law's marketplaces. Many of the remaining ones are worried about losing enrollment next year—largely among consumers who aren't eligible for subsidies and won't be able to get premium-free plans.

Insurers hope the no-premium insurance draws in more enrollees, particularly those they need most: people with few health needs. Healthy consumers help bolster the stability of the market by balancing out the health costs of sicker enrollees.

"We absolutely will be promoting this opportunity to get coverage at a zero price,"