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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 18, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROGER W. MARSHALL 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 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

END HUNGER NOW—DC CENTRAL KITCHEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this week I joined my colleague Representative G.T. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania on a visit to DC Central Kitchen.

G.T. serves as the chairman of the House Agriculture Committee's Nutrition Subcommittee, and I serve as the ranking Democratic member. Our committee oversees Federal nutrition and antihunger programs, including SNAP,

our Nation's first line of defense against hunger in communities all across this country. I have been fortunate enough to work with the incredible staff, students, and volunteers of DC Central Kitchen, so I am so pleased G.T. was able to join us this week to experience firsthand the impact that this organization has on the D.C. community. I very much appreciate his commitment to nutrition and his support for antihunger initiatives.

During our visit this week, we heard from the Kitchen's CEO, Michael Curtin. I continue to be inspired by Mike's commitment to and passion for alleviating hunger and offering some of the most vulnerable adults in this community the opportunity for a second chance.

What makes DC Central Kitchen so special is its mission. Not only does the organization work to address the immediate nutritional needs of local residents, but it works to train and empower adults with high barriers to employment to a successful job-training program.

This preeminent job-training program prepares vulnerable adults, those with difficult histories of incarceration, addiction, homelessness, trauma, and chronic unemployment, for careers in the culinary industry.

Importantly, students of the program also receive career-readiness training and self-empowerment counseling. As Mike pointed out during our visit, these important components of the program are a big part of why students are able to find and keep jobs after graduating.

The program works. After graduating, almost 90 percent of the program's participants find jobs in restaurants, hotels, cafeterias, schools, and other parts of the culinary industry.

So not only does the program offer participants the training they need to enter the workforce, it also helps local

businessowners staff their companies with motivated, trained individuals. It is a successful model that should be replicated.

A core aspect of DC Central Kitchen's mission is feeding hungry children, seniors, and other vulnerable adults. Each day the Kitchen uses 3,000 pounds of donated and recovered foods to make 5,000 healthy meals. In the past year alone, the Kitchen has delivered 1.8 million meals to 80 partner agencies.

A majority of the meals are delivered to at-risk children in afterschool programs, emergency shelters, adult education and services providers, child and youth services providers, and homeless shelters, but also to transitional housing, rehabilitation, drug treatment, and domestic violence shelters. They also receive food from the Kitchen as well.

I am particularly impressed by the reach of DC Central Kitchen's school food program, which provides healthy meals to kids in 15 local schools. Last year alone, the Kitchen prepared a million meals and snacks, and at least 50 percent of every plate was made of locally sourced produce. The program is supporting local farmers as well.

DC Central Kitchen is also working to expand its reach across the country by engaging high schools and college students with its successful campus kitchens project. On 53 high school and college campuses, students work to fight hunger and food waste by turning surplus food into healthy meals for those in need.

On top of all of this, DC Central Kitchen also has a successful catering arm that uses locally sourced produce to create healthy and delicious meals for special events. The catering coupled with private donations help to fund the Kitchen's programs and invest in these incredible students.

So during our visit earlier this week, we saw firsthand the positive impact the DC Central Kitchen is having on

□ 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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our community. We were able to meet some of the Kitchen's students, volunteers, and graduates who are now working at the Kitchen. They are inspirational.

But during our visit, we were also reminded that charities like DC Central Kitchen can't do it alone. They are only one piece of the puzzle when it comes to alleviating hunger and helping our most vulnerable neighbors get back to work.

In Congress, we need to support our Federal antihunger safety net and commit to long-term investments in areas like job training, housing, addiction recovery, and education, just to name a few.

At a time when progress in Washington is stalled, it was refreshing to join my colleague G.T., his staff, and a bipartisan group from the House Agriculture Committee in accomplishing something.

We all need to do more to help those who are having trouble putting food on the table, so it was great to chop peppers and carrots and radishes to help make nutritious salads for those in need. It was a great reminder that, working together, we can end hunger now.

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, every day law enforcement officers around this country protect our families from harm and keep peace and promote the cause of justice. As a former first responder myself, I am proud to support these heroes, especially those who have paid the ultimate price to keep our families safe.

National Police Week is a good reminder that we need to show support and appreciation to those who serve and protect us. We set aside this week each year to honor the call to service and profound commitment to duty embodied in our law enforcement officers—both in southern Illinois and across this Nation.

I join with the grateful communities around the Nation to thank our officers and honor those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. We pray for them and we pray for their families as they watch over us.

"I AM JAZZ"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor for the second year in a row to read the book "I Am Jazz," a children's book about transgender youth cowritten by Jazz Jennings, pictured here, and Jessica Herthel.

After an LGBT hate group forced a school to cancel a reading of this book 2 years ago, a movement was launched.

Every year since, readings have been held across the country to increase understanding and to show young people that they are welcomed and loved.

Last year I read this book from the House floor, and today I am proud to join this movement to read it again.

"I Am Jazz."

For as long as I can remember, my favorite color has been pink. My second favorite color is silver, and my third favorite color is green.

Here are some of the many other things I like to do: dancing, singing, backflips, drawing, soccer, swimming, makeup, and pretending I am a pop star.

Most of all, I love mermaids. Sometimes I even wear a mermaid tail in the pool.

My best friends are Samantha and Casey. We always have fun together. We like high heels and princess gowns or cartwheels and trampolines.

But I am not exactly like Samantha and Casey. I have a girl brain but a boy body. This is called transgender. I was born this way.

When I was very little and my mom would say, "You are such a good boy," I would say, "No, Mama. Good girl."

At first my family was confused. They had always thought of me as a boy. As I got a little older, I hardly ever played with trucks or tools or superheroes, only princesses and mermaid costumes. My brothers told me this was girl stuff. I kept right on playing.

My sister says I am always talking to her about my girl thoughts and my girl dreams and how one day I would be a beautiful lady. She would giggle and say, "You are a funny kid."

Sometimes my parents let me wear my sister's dresses around the house, but whenever we went out, I had to put on my boy clothes again. That made me mad. Still, I never gave up trying to convince them. Pretending I was a boy felt like telling a lie.

Then one amazing day, everything changed. Mom and Dad took me to meet a new doctor who asked me lots and lots of questions. Afterward, the doctor spoke to my parents, and I heard the word "transgender" for the very first time. That night at bedtime, my parents both hugged me and said, "We understand now. Be who you are. We love you no matter what."

This made me smile and smile and smile. Mom and Dad told me I could start wearing girl clothes to school and growing my hair long. Then they even let me change my name to Jazz. Being Jazz felt much more like being me. Mom said that being Jazz would make me different from the other kids at school, but that being different is okay. "What is important," she said, "is that I am happy with who I am."

Being Jazz caused some of the people to be confused, too, like the teachers at school. At the beginning of the year, they wanted me to use the boys bathroom and play on the boys team in gym class, but that didn't feel normal to me at all. I was so happy when the teachers changed their minds. I can't imagine not playing on the same team as Casey and Samantha.

Even today, there are kids who tease me or call me by a boy name or ignore me altogether. This makes me feel crummy. Then I remember that the kids who get to know me usually want to be my friend. They say I am one of the nicest girls at school.

I don't mind being different. Different is special. I think what matters most is what a person is like inside, and inside I am happy. I am having fun. I am proud. I am Jazz.

A TRULY OUTSTANDING AGENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Stearns County Corrections Agent Jeremy Gallagher. Mr. Gallagher recently received the Outstanding Agent Award from the Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties. Jeremy received this award because of his work with victims of domestic violence.

Jeremy has served as a corrections agent in Stearns County for 11 years, 4 of which have been spent as an agent in the county's Domestic Violence Court.

Being a corrections agent in domestic violence cases can be overwhelming, but not for Jeremy. He has embraced his role to aid and protect Minnesota families. Through his assignment, he has even discovered a passion for helping children overcome the trauma that domestic violence can bring.

Jeremy Gallagher has gone above and beyond his role as a corrections agent. He is so deserving of this award, and he is the first Stearns County agent to receive it.

I applaud Jeremy for his dedication to Minnesota families, and especially for his dedication to our children.

A VICTORIOUS WEEKEND

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an outstanding college student in my district.

Megan Hedstrom is currently in her senior year at St. Cloud State University. Megan has excelled in college as a student and as an athlete. She has a bright future.

Recently, Megan won a Crystal Pillar Award from the Upper Midwest Emmy Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. She received the award for a piece called "True Grit" that Megan wrote, edited, and produced for the university's television station.

As if her Crystal Pillar Award was not enough, Megan also pitched a perfect game this spring, leading the St. Cloud Husky softball team to victory over the University of Mary.

Megan excels in the classroom as well. Just this week she was named to the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Spring All-Academic team, which requires a minimum 3.2 GPA or higher.

Megan's academic success, her success on the softball field, and her chosen career path, deserve recognition and celebration.

Congratulations, Megan. We are proud to have students like you at St. Cloud State University.

A NORMANDY SCHOLAR

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Evan DuFresne and his teacher, Christopher Stewart, of the North Lakes Academy Charter School. Evan has recently been named a Normandy Scholar, and with this, Evan and Mr. Stewart have been chosen to attend the Normandy: Sacrifice

for Freedom Albert H. Small Student and Teacher Institute. They will participate in this prominent program alongside 14 other student and teacher teams from across the United States.

After coming up shy in last year's application, Evan doubled down on his commitment to this project. He resigned from the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program after 5 dedicated years and even chose to delay his plans to join the Army National Guard. Thankfully, Evan's perseverance and dedication appealed to this year's judges.

The Normandy Scholar Program allows student to learn about World War II at an in-depth level by researching and telling the story of a fallen soldier from their hometown.

□ 1015

The program also gives them the chance to pay their respects to this hero at the Normandy American Cemetery in Normandy, France.

Congratulations to both Evan and Mr. Stewart for being chosen to participate, and thank you for telling the story of an American hero from the Greatest Generation who paid the ultimate sacrifice. We look forward to hearing more about your educational journey in the months to come.

STILLWATER'S LAST MAN

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand in support of a local veteran who is now the last surviving member of his World War II veterans club.

Jean L. DeCurtins became the last member of his club when his lifelong friend Robert Kunshier passed away. Both were among the 180 men from the Stillwater area in Washington County, Minnesota, who joined the Minnesota National Guard's 34th Infantry right before World War II.

After the attacks on Pearl Harbor shook the Nation, DeCurtins and the rest of his unit deployed to Europe where they helped defend this Nation and the world. Jean was injured twice during the war and bravely returned to fight each time after recovery.

He returned to Stillwater, Minnesota, in 1944. Many of his friends did not return. The survivors in the area formed the A&D Last Man's Club, which was named after both companies the men belonged to during the war.

Mr. Speaker, men like Jean DeCurtins, and those in the Last Man's Club, bravely fought during World War II. They did so unselfishly and without reservation. We will never forget the courage and sacrifice they displayed during our Nation's and the world's darkest hour, and the world will always be thankful for them.

WELCOMING A STRANGER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, I received a letter from a third grade student at the

Brooklyn Friends School and the Kane Street Synagogue Hebrew School named Elijah.

Elijah wrote: At our synagogue, we learned that welcoming a stranger is an important mitzvah, and I know that my people were immigrants and sometimes refugees trying to find a new home in the USA. So it is important to me that we extend our welcome to refugees from Haiti.

Elijah is right. The people of Haiti have suffered through numerous tragedies over the past few years alone. They have experienced a devastating and catastrophic earthquake, tragic cholera epidemic, ongoing food scarcity crisis, deadly hurricanes, and continued flooding.

For these reasons, the Obama administration designated Haiti for temporary protected status in 2010, and redesignated it four times thereafter. However, Haiti's TPS designation will expire in July if the administration does not act immediately.

That is why I organized with my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus and called for DHS Secretary John Kelly to redesignate Haiti for an additional 18 months of TPS.

We also asked DHS to issue a new TPS designation that would include the tens of thousands of Haitians who are in the United States but are not covered by the existing TPS designation.

The continuing humanitarian crisis on the ground in Haiti should make this an easy call. But news reports indicate that the acting head of USCIS, James McCament, is looking for evidence of crimes committed by Haitians to use as a pretext for ending Haiti's TPS designation. Such actions are part of the Trump administration's attempt to depict immigrants as criminals. They are also part of a flagrant effort to obscure the fact that TPS is based on the conditions on the ground in Haiti rather than the actions of some TPS beneficiaries here in the United States.

I call on Director Kelly to ignore these misguided voices and instead listen to people like Elijah. Human decency demands that the Department of Homeland Security extend temporary protected status to all Haitians present in the United States prior to November 4, 2016, as the country continues to rebuild.

CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHECHNYA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned by the rapidly deteriorating human rights situation in Chechnya where hundreds of gay or perceived-to-be gay men have been harassed, have been tortured, and have been killed by Chechen authorities.

On April 1, a Russian independent newspaper first reported on this deten-

tion and disappearance of gay men, which the Chechen leader has continuously denied.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the leader Ramzan refuses to acknowledge that gay men exist in Chechnya, but we know from many credible reports that the Chechen Government has allegedly put these men into camps, and it plans to eliminate its entire gay population by Ramadan, which is May 26.

This is disheartening, to say the least, in an era where the world is moving toward tolerance and equality for all people. To hear about these atrocities being committed is very tragic. The United States should not and must not turn a blind eye to this unwarranted persecution. All individuals, no matter their sexual orientation, their gender identity, their religion, their race, or any other basis deserve the full enjoyment of their God-given rights. These are universal and are for all people to enjoy.

In the wake of these events, I joined several of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle in sending a letter to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to take swift action and condemn these atrocities which run counter to American values of promoting human rights and freedom and that should guide strategic decisions that we make on U.S. foreign policy.

I was glad to see that the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the Department of State spoke out against the practice of the Chechen authorities and called for the immediate release of the hundreds of detained men being held at these camps.

U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley must be congratulated, also. She condemned these abuses and raised the issue at the first U.N. Security Council meeting. I look forward to the continued collaboration of these agencies and with my colleagues because we must send a united and clear message that we are against all forms of discrimination and all forms of violence.

Mr. Speaker, we must not forget that Putin has significant influence over what goes on in Chechnya, and, to date, Putin has done nothing to help. This is simply outrageous.

From restrictions on political participation, to the suppression of civil society, to the silencing of religious minorities, to the prohibition of freedom of expression, Russia has a deplorable human rights record. Just over the last few years, the Russian Government has adopted laws that restrict free speech, that restrict free association of LGBT individuals, and Russian agencies threaten the removal of children from their rightful loving homes.

Chechnya's crackdown on the LGBT community, directed by government officials, it is very clear to see that these are not haphazard events. These are state-sponsored violent activities. It is time for Putin to talk to his crony Ramzan and put an end to this barbaric gay purge. No government ought to be

able to dictate how each person expresses their individuality, and no government ought to be able to use children as pawns to punish and intimidate others.

I am committed to supporting LGBT individuals under siege in Chechnya, and through the combined efforts of wonderful organizations like the Council for Global Equality, Human Rights First, Human Rights Campaign, Freedom House, and so many NGOs in Russia, we will continue to raise the alarm about Chechnya and Russia's declining human rights record and help find a safe haven to those facing persecution.

Living in a free society and a truly blessed nation like ours, it reaffirms our moral obligation and our unique responsibility to speak for those who find themselves under the shadow of oppression and tyranny.

Mr. Speaker, I am against any actions that undermine the human rights of any person, and, in the coming days, I will introduce a resolution that condemns these reports of violence and persecution in Chechnya. It calls on its officials to immediately stop the abduction, the detention, and the torture of individuals based on their sexual orientation. It is just unbelievable.

It urges further our U.S. leadership to continue to condemn Chechnya's ongoing human rights violations and demand the release of individuals wrongfully detained. We remain steadfast in our commitment to protect and promote the human rights and dignity of all people.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that our colleagues would join me in this worthy endeavor.

NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to act together in a bipartisan fashion to improve the state of our Nation's infrastructure. It is long overdue.

This week is National Infrastructure Week where we recognize the challenges we face in addressing America's transportation systems, its water systems, its ports, its harbors. Sadly, what we have to recognize isn't particularly positive.

This year, the infrastructure grade that we received from America's Society of Civil Engineers, a national organization that is made up of some of the best and the brightest engineers in our country, gave our Nation a D-plus. That is not a good grade. Never has been.

As a matter of fact, this same organization has estimated that, to rectify our Nation's infrastructure, we need to invest over \$1 trillion, \$1 trillion of new investments, to provide the sort of transportation, water and ports and harbors, that our Nation needs and deserves.

So we must do better than a D-plus. Literally, we are living off the investments that our parents and our grandparents made a generation and two ago, and it is an aging infrastructure.

We know from our country's history that the infrastructure projects that move forward most effectively are those combined with local, State, and Federal funding; all the governments doing their part with private participation.

We, in California, are no strangers to infrastructure problems caused by a lack of investment, but we are stepping up to the plate to make the necessary crucial improvements.

In my own district, the counties that I represent, Merced, Madera, and Fresno Counties, have all increased their local sales tax in order to pay for crucial road repairs, new road projects, highways, and other essential transportation needs.

Last month, the California legislature enacted legislation that Governor Brown signed into law to increase the State's gas tax and vehicle fee to pay for roads, bridges, and other transportation improvement projects.

Clearly, these are tough decisions, and they come with policy implications and political risks. I mean, let's face it, it is never popular, whether it is your local, State, or Federal level, to raise taxes to pay for these much-needed improvements, but it must be done. The last time we increased the gas tax nationally was 1994.

In California, Governor Brown's decision to pursue high-speed rail, among other efforts, is a long-term commitment in the 21st century to do what is necessary to create the inner city rail and auto and air transportation, the interconnectivity that comes with that.

There is a reason why we must do this. California has 40 million people today. By the year 2030, it will have 50 million people; the sixth or seventh largest economy in the world.

So why are we not doing this on a national level? It is simple. What is lacking is the political will—the political will to come together on a bipartisan basis. Now is the time for the Federal Government to face this challenge head-on in a bipartisan fashion. And we know we can do this.

□ 1030

Not only has the process begun in California, but many other States across the Nation have stepped up to the plate to put in resources to rebuild their infrastructure, and we must get serious about that. President Trump has made a proposal for infrastructure, and I think we need to ensure that that infrastructure proposal also includes water.

Water is critical not just in California but in Western States and throughout the country. We need to significantly improve our water storage or water delivery and our drinking water systems. We have taken initial

steps to meet these challenges by acting at the State and Federal level.

In 2014, California passed Proposition 1, which authorized \$7.12 billion for water infrastructure projects. Late last year, after hard work by many of my colleagues in a bipartisan fashion, the California delegation passed the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act, or the WIIN Act, that was signed by President Obama last December. This law authorized vital new water projects across the State, including, in the valley, additional storage at the New Exchequer Dam, and San Luis Reservoir in Merced County, as well as funding for water recycling projects like the North Valley Regional Recycled Water Program, and it will provide 50,000 acre-feet of additional water for both Merced and Stanislaus Counties.

Although we have made some significant efforts to improve California's water infrastructure, this first good step indicates that we must build upon that and do more at all levels of government. That is what we must do on a bipartisan level. Let's take President Trump's suggestion and make this a bipartisan effort. This is an opportunity to invest.

DC CENTRAL KITCHEN HELPS THE UNDERSERVED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I had the privilege of visiting the DC Central Kitchen, which is a nonprofit that fights hunger and poverty here in the Nation's Capital. But it fights hunger differently. Yes, DC Central Kitchen feeds people who are hungry. It also offers the training, empowerment, and career opportunities that allow people to finally be free from hunger and poverty.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Nutrition of the Committee on Agriculture, this visit was especially important to me, and I am grateful that I could volunteer and tour the site with my colleague and subcommittee ranking member, Congressman JIM McGOVERN.

DC Central Kitchen is located in the basement of one of the Nation's largest homeless shelters. It focuses its services on addressing the deeper issues that have plagued generations: hunger, homelessness, incarceration, and, ultimately, poverty.

CEO Michael Curtin made it very clear that DC Central Kitchen isn't merely offering handouts to those in need. He said, "You can't feed your way out of poverty," and I wholeheartedly agree with him. DC Central Kitchen puts as much emphasis on training those who come through its doors to prepare them to earn living wages as it does to provide meals to Washington's marginalized citizens.

People who receive services there truly do have a chance to escape poverty. They find employment right at DC Central Kitchen or in Washington's hospitality industry. DC Central Kitchen is helping people find jobs that pay living wages and obtain lasting careers.

In 1989, a nightclub manager named Robert Egger founded DC Central Kitchen. He was frustrated with his volunteer experiences at traditional charitable responses to help end hunger and homelessness. His idea was to create a "central kitchen" where wasted food could be turned into balanced meals for shelters and nonprofits and jobless adults could be trained in the culinary arts.

Of course, the critics said it couldn't be done. It was unwise. It was unsustainable. The concept was just not possible, they said. Well, they were wrong. And Robert was ahead of the curve and ahead of his time.

DC Central Kitchen's successes have been celebrated nationally. Its story has been featured in outlets ranging from National Geographic to The Washington Post to The Chronicle of Philanthropy and many more places. It works every day to transform food that would otherwise be wasted into nutritious meals for homeless shelters and nonprofits. It serves farm-to-school menus to low-income schoolchildren, all while creating job opportunities for unemployed adults who have completed its culinary job training program.

The numbers are clear. Last year, 91 individuals graduated from the program; 88 percent of them found good-paying jobs. Fifty percent of last year's graduates received a wage increase within 12 months of being on that job.

DC Central Kitchen has also expanded access to healthy foods by making them available at corner stores in D.C.'s food deserts. Last year alone, it supported store owners in selling more than 207,000 units of affordable, healthy snacks and produce.

Mr. Speaker, DC Central Kitchen is a shining example of what can be done to truly help the underserved in our communities all across this Nation. By giving individuals career training and job skills, it allows them to break the back of intergenerational poverty that has hindered the lives of so many.

No one in America should go hungry. Everyone deserves a shot at living a full, healthy, and productive life. DC Central Kitchen shows us this is possible.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my congratulations to the staff, to the volunteers, to the students, and to all those who had this vision with DC Central Kitchen.

THANK YOU, LAW ENFORCEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to

praise law enforcement across the Nation and the State of Missouri for their dedication, courage, and sacrifice in serving our communities.

This week is National Police Week. We should thank police every week, but this time of year provides a special opportunity to give honor where honor is due. Law enforcement officers deserve our deep appreciation and respect.

Police officers do an excellent job protecting the residents of my district, from Columbia to Waynesville, to Warrensburg and throughout Missouri. They stand ready to help wherever needed. That is why, today, I am introducing the Police Officers Protecting Children Act. This bill would allow schools that want to allow retired or off-duty law enforcement officers to be armed as a security measure to protect children in our schools. If a school wants to allow off-duty or retired police to protect their students, the Federal Government shouldn't stop them.

The Police Officers Protecting Children Act is even more important for schools in our rural communities where law enforcement may take a significant amount of time to respond to an emergency. A well-placed retired or off-duty officer could save lives.

Law enforcement in my district have shown their support for this bill because they know firsthand that police officers have the training and experience to protect our children when it counts. They have the trust of our communities and have years of experience carrying a weapon. I thank them for their service and their willingness to protect our children while they are at school.

Law enforcement officers live out the honorable duo of bravery and service. They put their lives on the line every day to protect our communities, often without the thanks they deserve. They work day in and day out patrolling our neighborhoods, getting drugs off the streets, and protecting us from criminals who seek to do us harm.

In Missouri, we honor the brave men and women who carry the badge as police officers. This National Police Week, I am glad to recognize those officers and their bravery and service protecting the people of Missouri.

So to the police around the Nation and in my home State of Missouri, I say to you: Thank you for your service. You make a difference every day, and we are so grateful for you.

GROWING UP IN A LAW ENFORCEMENT FAMILY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give a very personal thanks to our men and women in uniform during this National Police Week.

I was raised the son of the chief of police and the head of the fire depart-

ment of El Dorado, Kansas, for some 25 years. In that time, he taught me discipline and values. He taught me there was right and there was wrong, that some things are black and white in the world, and my father represented what the law was in my community.

Today, I celebrate this week with him and the men and women who served with him who gave me a deep respect for the rule of law and those who serve daily to uphold it. Certainly, I am the person I am today because of what my parents taught me, my family, and the community, and they still do to this day.

I can remember growing up and the first day my dad brought home Rene, our trained police dog, and how that dog became part of our family, a very gentle dog until one morning, we were playing football in the backyard, and one of my friends tackled me. We watched that police dog climb a 6-foot-high fence to come to my rescue.

I remember my dad pulling people from fires. I remember riding in the back of an old Jeep that was overhauled from an Army Reserve to fight prairie fires and grass fires, something I am sure that kids wouldn't be allowed to do today. My dad took me to the firing range time and time again, and I would watch my dad shoot 25 rounds into a small circle the size of a quarter week after week, training to do his job right. I remember him getting called out to domestic disturbances and crime scenes. I remember him disarming people with weapons time and time again, putting his life on the line.

But it is just not my family, Mr. Speaker. Families across the country have loved ones who serve our communities, States, and country.

Earlier this week, President Trump gave a great message: "No one asked these selfless men and women to enlist in this righteous cause or to enroll as foot soldiers in the eternal struggle against crime and violence. They joined the cause because their hearts were big and full of amazing courage."

Mr. Speaker, I salute the men and women in uniform and thank them for their service.

MY RECENT TRAVEL TO AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer a report on my recent travels to Afghanistan, where our Armed Forces remain engaged at a critical front of the global war on terrorism.

I have been a part of several congressional delegations to Afghanistan to survey conditions there, particularly as it concerns the progress being made by Afghan women and girls to attain equal rights. I was honored once again to lead a delegation of my colleagues to the region to conduct oversight of American operations and better inform our efforts here in Congress to fulfill

our constitutional responsibility to fund and support our military.

Mr. Speaker, it has been more than 15 years since American and allied forces invaded Afghanistan to topple the Taliban regime and stamp out the terrorist breeding ground it harbored. Many brave Americans have given their lives in the struggle to defeat the al-Qaida terrorist threat and protect our homeland. It is incumbent on us as a nation to honor their sacrifice by never allowing it to be in vain.

So much has been given and, because of that, so much has been gained. There is no question in my mind that our country is safer and the world is freer because of the work our military has done and continues to do in Afghanistan. That is an important truth I am reminded of in a powerful way each time I visit Afghanistan, and I am compelled to share it with my colleagues here in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I have said for years that the test for our success in Afghanistan going forward is the preservation of the gains made by women and girls. Having observed the treatment of women and girls in Afghanistan over many years now, I can tell you that the progress today is as fragile as ever.

There is good news. New laws criminalize violence toward women and offer them unprecedented legal protections. Girls are attending school and going to college. Women are working in government, serving in the military, in the police force, and even running for office. There is an Afghan Women's Chamber of Commerce that specifically works to see that women are incorporated into the nation's economic future.

For American women like me who grew up with parents telling me I could achieve anything I wanted to, those kinds of things are commonplace. For Afghan women who grew up in a culture that has subjugated them to second-class citizenship or worse, these activities are nothing short of extraordinary. Centuries of repression are being reversed, and a new generation of women that expects and demands basic rights is taking hold.

During our visit, our delegation was honored to meet with the Afghan First Lady, Mrs. Ghani, and many other women leaders. We discussed the opportunities now available to Afghan women that weren't conceivable 50 years ago under the Taliban, and most importantly they explained just how critical these gains are to the overall stability of Afghanistan.

□ 1045

While it is certainly encouraging to listen to these remarkable stories of hope and progress, there exists a deep concern among Afghan women about seeing these important gains backslide and their rights erode. In fact, in some areas of the country, this is already happening. The Taliban's resurgence amid the drawdown of coalition forces presents a major threat that we must acknowledge.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow this to happen. We cannot allow the gains we have made in Afghanistan to fall by the wayside.

We know all too well what can happen when radical oppressive ideologies are allowed to fester in hostile nations. Make no mistake: because freedom and fairness for Afghan women is essential to the security of our Nation, it is also crucial to our own.

That is why I am pleased that President Trump is reviewing our strategy in Afghanistan, including a reevaluation of troop levels and our rules of engagement.

Simply put, if we are going to be in Afghanistan, we need to be willing to do what it takes to succeed. Of course, the Afghan people must take the reins of their country's future, but the United States will play a key role in ensuring a lasting peace.

Right now I fear we have tied the hands of our military through reduced force strength and limited rules of engagement. We should never send our military men and women into harm's way without the tools and resources they need to get the job done. Reevaluating our force strength and rules of engagement is the right decision, and I look forward to hearing from President Trump and Secretary Mattis as the NATO summit approaches.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased that Congress was able to deliver a comprehensive appropriations bill that properly funds our military. Funding the government by short-term extensions takes away the Pentagon's ability to plan for the future. With everything going on in the world right now, including the situation in Afghanistan, we cannot hinder our commanders with financial uncertainties.

One of the reasons I was so eager to serve on defense appropriations was having the opportunity to reverse military cuts that made no sense. For the last several years, we have been in constant tension with the Obama administration, whose sequestration policy threatened to hollow out our military. But not anymore.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues who joined me on the delegation.

FLEXIBLE FLOW MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. FASO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the House's attention today to the ongoing negotiations between New York City and the States of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania, regarding the Flexible Flow Management Program.

The current Flexible Flow Management Program, which governs New York City reservoir releases into the Delaware River Basin, expires at the end of this month on May 31. This interstate agreement is a critically im-

portant water management tool that helps mitigate downstream impacts of New York City's reservoirs.

In addition to supporting the water allocation goals, the Flexible Flow Management Plan helps control the flow of water downstream, decreasing the likelihood of catastrophic flooding events. The FFMP also provides critical support to the Delaware River freshwater trout fishery, which is an important part of the Catskill's regional economy.

Unfortunately, if the Flexible Flow Management Plan is allowed to expire, we jeopardize the safety and well-being of constituents along the entire length of the Delaware River. The progress that has been made towards finalizing the FFMP agreement cannot be lost due to a breakdown in communications among decree party members.

I encourage all parties to return to the table from their respective States and agree to at least a 1-year extension to allow the negotiation process to continue.

Mr. Speaker, I call attention to this important issue because it greatly affects the lives and livelihoods of tens of thousands, indeed millions, of people in the entire Delaware River Valley and the Delaware River estuary, which covers New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the State of Delaware.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter I sent to the four States on May 11, 2017, on this important matter.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, May 11, 2017.

Secretary SHAWN GARVIN,
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and
Environmental Control, Dover, DE.

Commissioner BOB MARTIN,
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Trenton, NJ.

Secretary PATRICK McDONNELL,
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental
Protection, Harrisburg, PA.

Commissioner BASIL SEGGOS,
New York State Department of Environmental
Conservation, Albany, NY.

Acting Commissioner VINCENT SAPIENZA,
New York City Department of Environmental
Protection, Flushing, NY.

DEAR MEMBERS: As Decree Party Members, I want to thank you all for being willing and active participants during Flexible Flow Management Plan (FFMP) negotiations over the last number of years. Your past willingness to engage with all stakeholders is admirable.

Unfortunately, I am disheartened to hear that a finalized FFMP has yet to be established. Despite the recent breakdown in the conversation, I believe that it is not too late to continue collaborative negotiations toward a final agreement. With the deadline fast approaching, it is vitally important that all Decree Party Members return to the table to continue the dialogue. Incredible reforms and relationships have been established over the last decade; we cannot let these efforts go to waste.

I understand that several proposals to improve basin management and releases have been suggested up to this point, and I urge all Decree Party Members to consider positive reforms, including:

Thermal mitigation banks to provide support to cold-water fisheries during times of thermal stress in the Pepacton, Neversink, and Cannonsville ecosystems;

Flood mitigation improvements that will decrease the risk of disastrous flooding events both above and below the dams;

Continued evaluation of the impacts of fully utilizing the F.E. Walter Dam and reservoir.

Regardless of the final changes to the FFMP, it is imperative that we not sacrifice the progress which has been made over the last number of years. All parties' specific concerns and opinions have value, but we must accept that if we are not willing to negotiate and compromise we jeopardize the safety, well-being, and economic viability of all communities within the Delaware River Basin.

I eagerly anticipate a finalized FFMP before the May 31 deadline. If a new FFMP cannot be negotiated within that time, a one-year extension should be agreed upon. Reverting back to the 1980s reservoir management approach is unacceptable.

I am more than willing to provide support as needed.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. FASO,
Member of Congress,
19th Congressional District of New York.

WESTERN WALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BANKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, President Trump will embark on his first international trip as our Commander in Chief. I am very pleased to see that one of the first countries our President will visit is Israel, a nation that is a cherished American ally and a beacon of freedom in a troubled region.

This visit comes at an important time, as recent comments by an administration official created uncertainty as to whether the U.S. Government considers the Western Wall to be within Israeli territory. Located in the heart of Jerusalem's Old City, the Western Wall is one of the holiest sites in the world and a place where millions have gathered to pray and seek the presence of God.

Jewish tradition teaches that the Western Wall was an integral part of the Temple Mount and has been an important site in Judaism for more than 2,000 years.

It is vital that the United States Government recognize the Western Wall as part of Israel and that the President should affirm that position during his upcoming trip. I am hopeful that recognizing the Western Wall will be part of a process to formally recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

REPEALING THE DURBIN AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, right now we are having a fierce debate in the Republican Conference over the Durbin amendment, which is a price control on debit swipe fees. Retailers have claimed that the Durbin amendment is

about competition. They have claimed that it is about restoring a broken market. They have claimed that Visa, MasterCard, and issuing banks are engaged in price-fixing on swipe fees.

This is a key element of this debate. A vote to keep the Durbin amendment is a vote that rests on the idea that Members are sure that there is price-fixing in the debit card market. There is \$6 billion to \$8 billion per year at play here, and the violation of a core free-market principle, which is the notion that government should not be telling people what they can or can't charge.

My point would be that, if you do that, if you support that degree of command and control in the economy, you have got to be sure.

And should we be sure?

I go back to the Sherman Antitrust Act, which outlaws price-fixing. This is a criminal law. Hundreds of people have been put in jail for it. You can go to jail for up to 10 years for violating it, and the law has stood for more than 100 years.

Payment networks and retailers have been fighting over whether or not Visa, MasterCard, and issuing banks are violators of the Sherman Antitrust Act for 30 years. And one of the earlier rulings goes back to 1986.

There is ongoing litigation now. In fact, there are more than 15 different cases out there on this. Litigation, I would add, that the retailers have never won when cases went to trial. In the major cases that we have managed to find, they are 0-3.

They are actually in the middle of another big case right now. There was a settlement, and later a higher court set it aside. A sentence of that ruling reads:

"Discovery included more than 400 depositions, 17 expert reports, 32 days of expert deposition testimony, and the production of over 80 million pages of documents."

Eighty million pages. I have studied this issue for months, and I have not read 80 million pages. I am a retailer, and I have paid thousands of dollars in swipe fees, so I know the difference between point of sale and Square mobile payments. I have used these systems, but I still don't know.

That is why I oppose the Durbin amendment: because I am not sure that this price control is necessary. Therefore, I put the Federal Government in the role of judge, jury, and executioner for the payment industry. For me to do that, I would have to be sure.

I know that the government wasn't sure when they came up with the regulation. They originally came up with 12 cents per transaction. Then the final rule finally came in at 24 cents.

Were they right the first time?

Were they wrong the second time?

There is no way to know for sure.

I guarantee you that when we walk down to this floor and we vote on this issue and choose to uphold a policy which many free-market think tanks

have said harms consumers, Members will not have read 80 million pages. If we are honest with ourselves, most will not have read 80 pages. There is no way we could, given everything that is in front of the Federal Government, even if we wanted to.

Economist F.A. Hayek got at this in his criticism of the planned economy. He said that socialism doesn't work because of what he called "the unavoidable imperfection of man's knowledge."

Hayek was referring to human beings at large. I would offer that the knowledge of politicians—speaking for myself, in particular—must be that much more imperfect.

You don't have to believe that the banks are angels, and you don't have to disbelieve the retailers to oppose the Durbin amendment. You just have to feel a bit of doubt either way.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 55 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Pastor Glen Berteau, The House Modesto, Modesto, California, offered the following prayer:

God, Your Word says that unity and light extinguish darkness and chaos. We debate opinions while not recognizing that You are the answer. Behind me the words "In God We Trust" are not a suggestion.

God, we have told You to leave, but come back to our schools, our businesses, our streets, our families, our government. I ask You to fill the political seats in America with God-fearing, God-following leaders. I pray for our Nation to stop rising up in division against one another and instead kneel down and pray for one another.

Instead of petitioning opinions and protest, we petition You in prayer. I pray for hate to dissipate from the heart of our society. Lord, You are our protection, our sustaining power.

Protect our first responders. Protect our powerful military. Protect the citizens of this great Nation, and let us not forget that You are our national security.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LAWSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAWSON of Florida 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.

WELCOMING PASTOR GLEN BERTEAU

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor today to introduce to the House our guest chaplain, Glen Berteau of Modesto, California.

Glen is the senior pastor of The House in Modesto, a church of more than 8,000.

Supporting his community is a priority, and, under Glen's leadership, The House Modesto has established programs to fight against human trafficking, provided groceries on a weekly basis to those in need, repaired bicycles for the homeless, and developed mobile medical and dental clinics that provide services free of charge.

The House was also recently recognized by the city of Modesto for their annual event, Unity Matters, which honors law enforcement and first responders.

Glen is originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and has called California his home for over 24 years. He and his wife, Deborah, have been in ministry for over 40 years, have been married for 42 years, and they have 3 children, 5 grandchildren.

Glen is a gifted speaker, teacher, and evangelist and has ministered at conferences, churches, and conventions all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Pastor Glen Berteau. We thank him for offering today's opening prayer in the United States House of Representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PALMER). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

IRAN-NORTH KOREA LINK

(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, The Post and Courier of

Charleston, on May 6, explained the Iran-North Korea link in an editorial:

"President Trump is looking for ways to put a squeeze on North Korea that will persuade it to give up nuclear weapons and the missiles to carry them . . . there is another collaborator with North Korea that appears to be helping it survive: Iran."

"According to Jeffrey Lewis of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California, the evidence of collaboration between North Korea and Iran is ample and of long standing. 'The very first missiles we saw in Iran were simply copies of North Korean missiles. Over the years, we have seen photographs of North Korean and Iranian officials in each other's countries, and we have seen all kinds of common hardware.'"

" . . . President Obama got Tehran to agree to reduce its stock of enriched uranium. . . . But the agreement is a weak one if Tehran is simply paying Pyongyang to do the design work for missiles and warheads. . . ."

"And if Iran is paying North Korea for help, then the sanctions . . . are also being fatally undermined."

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SHOULD INVESTIGATE HEALTHCARE COMPANIES

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, it was reported in The New York Times on Monday that UnitedHealthcare and four of the Nation's largest health insurance companies concocted a scheme to defraud the Medicare program and the American people out of tens of billions of dollars each year over the past decade.

The United States Department of Justice yesterday joined the lawsuit and is investigating these serious charges against UnitedHealthcare and the others. The Justice Department should conduct an investigation aggressively and thoroughly to get to the truth and to exact justice.

If these allegations are true, these actions would represent among the most egregious schemes of fraud perpetrated against the American people.

Shockingly, the House Republican health bill gave a \$78 million tax cut to the executives of the very companies that are under investigation, including a \$15.5 million tax cut to UnitedHealthcare and their chief executive officer.

This information can easily be found on page 67 in 3 lines of the Republican healthcare bill.

This is, Mr. Speaker, a blatant violation of the public trust that this Congress took an oath to protect and to uphold.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Police Week. I rise today to honor the brave men and women in blue who sacrifice their safety every day to keep our families and communities safe.

Each day these Americans go to work willing to put their lives on the line for the security of their fellow Americans.

We often hear the remarkable stories of our law enforcement officers. These men and women work long hours and late shifts, often being called into work and called away from their families. These are the people who risk their lives to protect our very neighborhoods, schools, communities, while asking nothing in return.

These professionals exhibit the greatest love of all, and that is to offer their lives to protect another.

I pray for those who have lost their lives, like Sergeant Greg Meagher, a 33-year veteran of the Richmond County Sheriff's Office who lost his life earlier this year in the line of duty. We will never forget his ultimate sacrifice.

Our safety depends on these amazing people, and I am proud to honor them here today.

INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK

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

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this week is infrastructure week, and today I rise to highlight the need to update our country's aging infrastructure system. This is a topic that is important in both the rural and urban areas of our country.

From the highway system in Lake City, Florida, to the port needs of Jacksonville, we must put forth the necessary resources to update our transit needs.

Each year, millions of tons of freight traffic, seaport cargo, and rail cargo pass through Jacksonville as they are transported to communities throughout our country.

The Jacksonville Transportation Authority is building a 57-mile bus rapid transit system, which is cost-effective and will support hundreds, and potentially thousands, of new jobs.

They are also overseeing the development of the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center, a transportation hub that will consolidate major modes of public transportation, making transit more accessible and convenient.

While that is all good news, there is still much work to be done to improve our infrastructure in north Florida.

REMEMBERING ROXCY O'NEAL BOLTON

(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, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to recognize the beloved memory of a dear friend, Roxcy O'Neal Bolton, who passed away the morning of May 17.

Roxcy was born in Mississippi and later moved to Coral Gables, Florida, in my congressional district, where she spent the last 53 years of her rich and accomplished life.

Roxcy became a champion for women everywhere. She was on the front lines fighting on behalf of abused women and created the first women's rescue shelter and the first crime watch in Florida to help curb crime against women. Roxcy also established the first rape treatment center in the country located at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, which serves as the model for the creation of many other such centers across our Nation.

It was Roxcy's vision that helped establish The Women's Park of Miami-Dade County, which was later renamed after Roxcy.

The passing of Roxcy O'Neal Bolton is a huge loss for those of us in south Florida; and, Mr. Speaker, it is a huge loss for women everywhere. We are comforted by her outstanding legacy, which will live forever.

My prayers go out to her children, David, Bonnie, and Buddy, and to all of her loved ones during this most difficult time.

Way to go, Roxcy. We are going to miss you forever, my friend.

PROTECTING PERSONAL PRIVACY

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, for years now the NSA has been collecting phone and online communications from everyday Americans from all across the country, defying the rights and liberties granted to us under the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution.

The 2008 FISA amendments, specifically section 702, has led to massive government-led exploitation of personal privacy through the collection of American citizens' emails. We need serious reforms that balance the protections of our civil liberties and rights through our Constitution and also keep the American people safe.

The NSA recently announced that they would stop collecting our emails and electronic communications under section 702, but what is to say it wouldn't start up again?

That is why I am introducing legislation today to keep our country from backtracking on this progress. My bill will permanently codify this policy change and ban this privacy-evading collection from taking place again.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and defending our civil liberties.

DROWNING PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of the two children who die every single day in the United States as a result of drowning.

I want to recognize the Young Men's Christian Association, the YMCA, for their efforts to empower youth with the imperative skills and knowledge to prevent these tragic accidents.

Drowning is the number two cause of death for children ages 1 to 4, second only to birth defects. In Texas alone, 107 children lost their lives due to drowning last year. In 2017, we have already lost 14.

Mr. Speaker, these statistics are absolutely unacceptable. Both in Texas and across the Nation, there is an opportunity and a need to save these young individuals.

The YMCA is example of an organization that is changing the statistics for kids across the country. It is bringing swimming safety and drowning prevention to communities that historically could not obtain them before. It partners with local schools to transport kids to the Y for year-round swimming lessons.

I am proud to say that the YMCA of Austin is one of many across the country implementing the Safety Around Water program. The program strives to reduce these incidences by going into overlooked communities to provide the necessary resources for kids who otherwise would not have access to these lifesaving skills.

I applaud the Austin YMCA on its tireless efforts to save the lives of our children.

In God we trust.

PROTECT OUR DEMOCRACY

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise yet again to challenge you to put country before political party. For too long, candidate and now President Trump has been playing a game of dangerous liaisons with Vladimir Putin and his Russian regime.

He called on Russian spies—that is right, the KGB—to hack his opponent. He fired the Acting Attorney General who warned him. He fired the FBI Director investigating him. And he has shared highly classified intelligence with Russia, posing a direct threat to our brave assets on the ground.

When is enough enough?

Mr. Speaker, how much longer before you do your job and bring up the bipartisan Protecting Our Democracy Act that is cosponsored by 199 Members of this House?

Show us that you have the courage to put country before political party. Show us that you meant it when you said "against all enemies, foreign and domestic." Show us that you will do what is right by our country and stand up to this President.

□ 1215

CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL HONORED AS A LEADER IN SOUTH CAROLINA

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

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to congratulate Clinton High School in my home county of Laurens, South Carolina, for being named one of the Best High Schools by U.S. News & World Report's school rankings.

Congratulations to my friend Maureen Tiller, the teachers, the students, and the parents. This really is an honor that goes to all of you for all of your hard work that you put forth in educating the next generation of leaders in South Carolina.

U.S. News compiled and analyzed data from over 22,000 public high schools, and Clinton High was recognized as a leader in South Carolina.

I want you to know how proud I am of you for all that you have accomplished and wish you the best as you continue to work to educate our children.

So congratulations, Principal Tiller, on getting this great recognition.

Now, as a side note, both of my sons, Graham and John Philip, have graduated from Clinton High. My third son is currently a sophomore at Clinton High. He is also all-region and all-State for the Red Devils boys soccer team.

Congratulations to Parker and Clinton High.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE LABORATORIES

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate and recognize our Department of Defense laboratories. I am pleased to introduce a bipartisan resolution to designate May 18 as Department of Defense Laboratory Day 2017.

Mr. Speaker, Defense labs have played a unique role in countless innovations that have enhanced and strengthened our national security. Defense-supported research and development has yielded many game-changing state-of-the-art weapons systems and technologies, ensuring that we never send our men and women in uniform into a fair fight.

Our Defense labs also contribute to American economic growth by spurring

the creation of new industries, companies, and jobs across the country, guaranteeing that America leads the way in cutting-edge science and technology.

Mr. Speaker, in celebration of all the work and accomplishments of our national network of Defense laboratories, and most especially the incredibly talented scientists, researchers, and support staff who support them and staff them, please join me in honoring their contributions to our security.

CHANCE FOR PEACE

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, President Eisenhower's most famous speech was his farewell address in which he criticized the military industrial complex.

However, 7 years earlier, in April of 1953, he gave a speech, entitled, "The Chance for Peace," with these words: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

"The cost of one modern heavy bomber," Eisenhower added, "is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. . . . We pay for a single fighter with a half-million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people. . . ."

Eisenhower concluded: "This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense . . . it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

President Eisenhower loved the military, but he hated war. He would never have gone along with a 16-year war in a place like Afghanistan, especially since it is one mainly done for personal glory for generals and more money for defense contractors.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I proudly represent North Carolina's 12th Congressional District, leader in transportation and infrastructure.

We have Norfolk Southern's state-of-the-art intermodal yard connecting trucking, rail, and air to East Coast seaports. We are home to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport, eleventh busiest in the Nation, nearly 700 American Airlines flights departing daily.

I-85, I-77, Route 21, and Highway 115 move over 800,000 residents and products from businesses like International Paper and Coca-Cola Consolidated. Our LYNX and rapid bus transit lines are

making our cities greener. And as we say in Charlotte, we've got a lot.

I am committed to ensuring we remain a national leader. I am hosting a regional transportation summit to help promote Route 21 and Highway 115 projects, continue developing our rapid transit systems, move our Red Line project forward, and to ensure that our airport can complete its new terminal and runway projects.

We are "One Meck." Transportation has made us an economic powerhouse and southern hub of cultural diversity. During National Infrastructure Week, I urge my colleagues to work to make greater investments in our Nation's infrastructure.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, as we have heard, this week is National Police Week. It is a time for us to honor the service of those officers who have fallen in the line of duty and to recognize those who serve and protect our communities day in and day out.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant Paul Arnold of the Franklin, Tennessee, Police Department. Sergeant Arnold is a 26-year Franklin Police veteran. In July of last year, for the third time, he faced a cancer diagnosis. Through each of these diagnoses, treatment, rehab, he has maintained one demand, and that is that it not affect the work that he is doing in the line of duty with the Franklin Police Department.

Today, the police department is standing together as he is receiving the Theodore Roosevelt Association Police Award, which is given to an officer who has rendered outstanding and praiseworthy service to the department and the community despite a serious handicap, illness, or injury.

His dedication to service is noted. It is appreciated. We honor him and congratulate him on a well-deserved honor and say thank you to all of the law enforcement community that chooses to protect and defend.

CALLING FOR SPECIAL COUNSEL

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, on April 4 of this year, I, along with my colleagues TED LIEU and KATHLEEN RICE, sent a letter to the Department of Justice asking that they appoint a special counsel to investigate any Trump campaign collusions with Russia.

Yesterday, the Department of Justice took a step in the right direction by appointing former FBI Director Robert Mueller as the special counsel to oversee the Federal investigation into pos-

sible Russian interference in the 2016 election, including potential collusion between Trump campaign associates and Russian officials.

I have worked with Mr. Mueller at Justice and recognize his past accomplishments. His appointment speaks to the urgency of bringing some stability to this process so that Congress can get back to the business of working on what our constituents need most: issues affecting Virgin Islanders and the United States of America and the world; issues of jobs, infrastructure, education.

Last week I introduced H.R. 2404, the Improving the Treatment of the U.S. Territories Under the Federal Health Programs Act of 2017, a bill to remove the existing inequities and disparities that territories face under Medicaid and Medicare, and also to provide us with a fair share of funding for our hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, these are the types of issues Congress must begin to work on for the American people, and I ask my colleagues to continue to put people over politics.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK 2017

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Police Week. It is a privilege to take the time this week to reflect, remember, and honor our Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers who courageously defend American citizens and protect our communities. They selflessly put their lives on the line to ensure that this Nation is one of safety and order.

On November 18, 2016, the reality of that danger hit home in Georgia's First Congressional District. Deputy Commander Patrick Carothers, a 26-year veteran of the U.S. Marshals Service and a resident of Long County, lost his life in the line of duty while serving a routine warrant. He left behind a loving wife and five children.

This week the House will vote on H.R. 115, the Thin Blue Line Act. With this bill, we can put a safeguard in place that works to protect our officers and their families from experiencing the same tragedy that took Commander Carothers' life.

Thank you to the hardworking men and women of law enforcement that work each day to keep us safe, and thank you to the family of Commander Carothers, who sacrificed his life in the name of public good. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

WE NEED TO FIX OUR FAILING INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, you know, if there is an issue that has the opportunity to pull Congress together, it is the need to fix our failing infrastructure. You all know the statistics, but suffice it to say, if your child had the grade of our infrastructure, they would be going to summer school this summer.

In my district in Colorado, it is the upgrades for Interstate 25 between Denver and Fort Collins for the tens of thousands of commuters each day; it is the backup from skier traffic returning from the mountains on Interstate 70, or our Northwest line commuter rail that is 35 years behind schedule.

Of course, there are people who came within a hair's breadth of missing their flight because of interstate traffic. What is happening to my district and my State is happening across the country.

But it is not just roads and bridges we need to fix. To connect and improve our communities, the true definition of infrastructure includes investments in broadband, 21st century infrastructure, clean water systems, schools, public rail, pedestrian and bike paths, airports, energy efficiency, storage, and transmission to make our country stronger and reduce costs.

Now is the time to act on an infrastructure package that has true investment. It can't just be toll roads or a giveaway to Wall Street. A fully paid-for infrastructure package will be a boon for the country, for our cities, for our towns, for our rural areas, and for the middle class.

Infrastructure is a today problem that we can come together and solve. We need to act now and make infrastructure a priority.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

(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, May is National Foster Care Month and a time to recognize the more than 400,000 foster youth in America. During this month, we renew our commitment to ensuring that every child has a safe, loving family.

I am a member of the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth and continue to this day to have a foster brother that I grew up with. I know firsthand how a loving, supportive home can make all the difference in a young person's life.

Mr. Speaker, if we were able to bring together all these children into one city, this city would be the 43rd or the 44th largest city in the country. More than 200,000 children enter the foster care system every year, which translates to a child entering care every 2 minutes. Approximately 254,000 will leave foster care this year; nearly 128,000 will be reunified with their families; another 52,000 will find new loving families through adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I thank every foster parent, volunteer, and mentor who works to make sure the needs of our children are not only being met, but they have the opportunity to thrive in a loving home.

□ 1230

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1039, PROBATION OFFICER PROTECTION ACT OF 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 324 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 324

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1039) to amend section 3606 of title 18, United States Code, to grant probation officers authority to arrest hostile third parties who obstruct or impede a probation officer in the performance of official duties. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; (2) the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on House Resolution 324, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring this rule forward on behalf of the Committee on Rules today. The rule provides for the consideration of H.R. 1039, the Probation Officer Protection Act. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chairman and rank-

ing member of the Committee on the Judiciary. The rule also provides for a motion to recommit and makes in order an amendment by Congresswoman JACKSON LEE of Texas.

On Tuesday, the Committee on Rules had the opportunity to hear from my fellow Committee on the Judiciary members: Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. CICILLINE, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 1039 was marked up by the Committee on the Judiciary on May 3 and favorably reported by the committee without amendment.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that we debate this rule and the underlying bill this week during National Police Week. As the son of a Georgia State Trooper, it is an honor to come before this House to help advance legislation that protects the men and women of law enforcement. The dangers our law enforcement officers face are real, and I know too well the fear that a loved one might not come home after leaving for a routine shift. This week we had the opportunity to recognize those who make our communities safer, and we are humbled to advance the policies that support their efforts, and we honor their sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to point out that the sponsor of the underlying bill we are discussing, the Probation Officer Protection Act, is a former law enforcement officer himself. My friend DAVE REICHERT from Washington State is Sheriff REICHERT also, who led the task force responsible for solving the case of the infamous Green River serial killer. Along with him, I serve on the Policing Strategies Working Group, and I commend him for his work on the underlying legislation and his tireless advocacy on behalf of the heroes who wear the badge.

The Probation Officer Protection Act is a commonsense, yet modest, expansion of the Federal probation officers' existing arrest authority. Under current law, 18 U.S. Code section 111, it is a crime for a person to forcibly assault, resist, oppose, impede, intimidate, or interfere with any Federal official in the performance of his or her official duties. While the Federal officials described by this statute include probation officers, probation officers are limited in their ability to take affirmative actions in order to protect themselves when they face these threats not from the offender but from third parties.

Mr. Speaker, while probation officers can make arrests of those under their supervision, the first party, such as a parolee or individual serving a term of probation or supervised release, the law does not allow probation officers to take action to protect themselves should a third party impede or assault them.

In fact, if a third party, such as a family member or friend of a parolee, threatens or attacks a probation officer, that officer's only recourse is to retreat and call for local law enforcement.

Think about that, Mr. Speaker. I want to read that again.

If a third party, such as a family member or friend of a parolee, threatens or attacks a probation officer, that officer's only recourse is to retreat and call for local law enforcement.

Because the law has failed to equip probation officers with the authority to arrest an aggressive third party, probation officers have limited recourse when their safety is uncertain. Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable and even defies reason. When probation officers find themselves in a dangerous situation involving third parties, they are at the mercy of happenstance. Perhaps, in urban areas, other law enforcement agents may be in proximity and able to respond. Perhaps, at times, the brave men and women who oversee offenders on release may have access to the backup they need once a third party threat has been established. But I will tell you this, in these certain areas that may happen. But it is possible, though, that without the authority to deescalate or manage a dangerous situation without the necessary authority to arrest threatening third parties, probation officers will remain unnecessarily vulnerable to attacks, violence, or even death.

In rural areas, like my district in northeast Georgia, a probation officer's restricted authority to arrest could pose an even greater risk to their well-being. Local law enforcement agencies in rural areas are often smaller and more separated from backup by distance. This means that probation officers who call for help could be subject to longer response times in the very moment they need the assistance the most.

Considering these facts, Mr. Speaker, it is reasonable to make a narrow, yet important, adjustment to current law in order to ensure that the probation officers have third-party arrest authority when they are forcibly threatened by that third party. Simply put, probation officers enter dangerous situations for the benefit of our communities and should be able to effectively protect themselves and others.

The Probation Officer Protection Act would address this flaw in current law by providing necessary recourse for probation officers. Under the terms of the bill, probation officers would have the authority to arrest hostile third parties who forcibly assault, resist, or otherwise impede a probation officer as they are carrying out their sworn duties.

We have heard examples of probation officers making visits to those under supervision, only to be greeted by third parties who are wielding knives or baseball bats or yelling obscenities at the officers as they attempt to serve the larger community. In these events, probation officers should not be handicapped in their ability to perform their jobs while protecting their own safety. As we know all too well, situations with agitated third parties can escalate

in an instant. Officers on site need to be equipped to deescalate dangerous situations for the good of the supervisee, the probation officer, and any bystanders.

This legislation does not represent an unprecedented or large-scale expansion of authority for probation officers. Probation officers already have limited arrest authority for first-party offenders. They are also bound by formal search and seizure policy and arrest procedures. Probation officers receive training that instructs them in properly detaining offenders so that they will be equipped with the necessary skills to manage dangerous individuals in circumstances that might warrant it.

Mr. Speaker, the intent behind the underlying bill is but one example of a larger effort behind much of the legislation we have seen on the floor this week. Every day, law enforcement officers put their lives on the line to protect us. Every day, they face dangerous situations for the sake of their neighbors. Law enforcement officers across the country bravely walk into uncertain situations prepared to protect and defend you and me and the people that we love.

I believe that our Nation's law enforcement—be they local, county, State, or Federal agents—overwhelmingly abide by their oath to protect and serve. In turn, we should remember their bravery and sacrifices each day and thank those who risk their lives to protect us. We must also thank the families who kiss their loved ones good-bye each morning, fully aware of the risk that their service entails.

Our men and women in blue should experience our gratitude every day, but this week, during Police Week, it is right for us to take the extra care to commemorate those who have fallen and to honor those who are serving.

As thousands of law enforcement professionals visit our Nation's Capital this week, I encourage all of my colleagues to thank them for their service. Also, I ask that all of my colleagues in this body look at this commonsense piece of legislation and show their support by voting "yes."

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 1039, but first and foremost, I want to make sure that we recognize and honor the work and sacrifice that our police and first responders do each and every day.

This week is National Police Week and, frankly, it is an opportunity to honor every week, but in particular this week, those who run toward the gunfire, those who run toward the building on fire every day.

In my own district in Colorado, I hear so many countless stories of heroic acts and going above and beyond

the call of duty by those on the front lines of keeping us safe. In one example in Colorado, Officer Ross Maynard responded to a domestic violence situation. The victim's former boyfriend had broken a living room window in the middle of January, leaving the victim and her young daughter exposed to our record cold temperatures. Maynard went above and beyond his duty and covered the window to keep out the elements. He vacuumed the shattered glass from the floor when he found out the victim didn't have a vacuum so that the child didn't receive cuts from the glass.

In example of heroism, dispatcher Sara Demgen calmly helped a man deliver his son when his wife went into labor and they realized they wouldn't be able to make it to the hospital.

It is individuals like these who we should celebrate and support through our work here in Congress. Unfortunately, the legislation we are considering today doesn't make anyone safer, and if we passed it, it would bring about a constitutionally dubious process that could interfere with the important work of law enforcement professionals.

Part of the reason this is problematic legislation is because the process this legislation followed—like a lot of stuff that we have to vote on—was not transparent and was not regular order. There was no hearing on this bill. Even if we look back at last year's version of the bill, there was no hearing on that one, either.

Then we look at the rule that we are debating now. Mr. Speaker, a rule means what is the process for amending this bill. What we have here is a shutting down of that process, where they didn't provide an open rule. They allowed only one amendment as part of this bill that had been offered. There was no opportunity on the floor, through what is called an open rule, for Democrats or Republicans to offer good ideas to improve this legislation.

Of the six amendments that were submitted that the Committee on Rules considered yesterday, five of them were killed by the Committee on Rules and not even allowed to be voted on or debated by the House of Representatives. Now, the number of times I have had to come to this floor and argue against a closed rule or a structured rule is exhausting, and it is contrary to Speaker RYAN's promise that he made for the world to hear that he would bring us back to regular order and give everybody input on legislation that we consider in what is supposed to be the people's House.

This rule, yet again, is not open. It rules five of the six amendments out of order. The confidence and the trust in the House of Representatives, it is hard to imagine how it could even sink much lower, but it is restrictive processes and rules like this where neither Republicans or Democrats are allowed to even offer amendments or debate amendments to improve the legislation

that have led to the record level of distrust in this body.

In a moment, I will look forward to discussing the bill itself, but I just wanted to take this occasion in particular to celebrate our law enforcement professionals on National Police Week and every week.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, again, I appreciate my colleague pointing out certain things. Again, I think pointing out the complete story there would also be helpful, and that is that the amendments spoken of that were not made in order, following the rules of the House, the Jefferson's Manual, and all were not germane. The one amendment that was offered was made in order for this bill. The others were not germane. If they want to be brought up in a separate bill or separate order or find a bill that is actually germane to it, then that is a different issue, but not in this one.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, it seems that with each passing day, we learn more about the tangled web of conflicts of interest and secret meetings with Russians in and around the Trump campaign and Trump administration. Last week, President Trump fired FBI Director James Comey while he was overseeing the FBI's investigation into possible collusion between Trump campaign officials and the Russian Government, after reportedly asking Director Comey personally to drop the investigation into former National Security Advisor Flynn's ties to Russia. This week, we also learned that President Trump revealed highly classified information provided by an ally to Russian officials.

Without President Trump's tax returns, we have no way of knowing if he himself has financial ties or is financially beholden to Russia or Russian interests, as news reports have suggested. The American people deserve to know whether or not President Trump has conflicts of interest, financial interests, or business dealings with Russia or other foreign governments. It is imperative that we, as the people's representatives, hold the executive branch fully accountable.

Mr. Speaker, when we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative ESHOO's bill, H.R. 305, which would require Presidents and major party nominees for the Presidency to release their tax returns.

If the President truly has nothing to hide, including business dealings or being economically beholden to Russia, he should freely release his tax returns to reassure the American people that they can have confidence that he is not acting out of conflict of interest but, rather, in our interest as a nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extra-

neous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, to discuss our important proposal, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, and I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that the House can vote on my bipartisan legislation, the Presidential Tax Transparency Act.

Mr. Speaker, in the last week, the President fired the FBI Director who was investigating him. We then learned that the President also pressured the Director to end his investigation of Michael Flynn's Russia entanglements. These revelations, added to so many others, make it abundantly clear that we must have disclosure of the President's tax returns in order to fully understand his connections to Russia. The Presidential Tax Transparency Act would require this disclosure for the current President, all future Presidents, and Presidential nominees.

□ 1245

This practice has never been required by law. But if there were ever a time for Congress to codify this bipartisan disclosure tradition, now is the time.

The President's behavior has raised questions since before the election about what connections or exposure he may have to Russian officials. After the FBI, the CIA, and the NSA concluded that Russia did, in fact, interfere in our national elections; after several of the President's associates and staff lied about meetings with Russian officials during the campaign and transition; and after the FBI opened an investigation into these Russia contacts, the President still welcomed top Russian diplomats into the Oval Office for a closed-door meeting last week.

Holding the meeting itself raised many questions. But in the meeting, the President revealed highly classified, code-word information to the Russians. I believe that this is unprecedented. No President in the history of our country has ever done such a thing.

And on May 16, The New York Times reported that the President pressed the former FBI Director Jim Comey to end his investigation of Michael Flynn's ties to Russia before he fired him. This all begs the question: Why is the President so eager to please the Russians?

The appointment of former FBI Director Mueller, a highly distinguished public servant, as special counsel is most welcome. But I believe that Congress can act today to provide public disclosure of the President's tax returns, which would provide an immediate and important window into the President's potential Russian entanglements, and answer the critical ques-

tions of: To whom does he owe money? And who is the President doing business with? What are those entities?

We know there are 564 of them. The American people deserve to know. Only with full disclosure will we know the true sources of the President's income, the holders of his debt, and the extent of any business ties to Russia and other foreign countries.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a highly serious, bipartisan—I want to stress that—bipartisan effort to exercise Congress' constitutional duty to serve as a check and balance on the executive branch as a coequal branch of government.

As the former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said on May 14:

Our institutions are under attack, both externally . . . and internally.

I want to thank all of the cosponsors of this bill and, most especially, the Republicans who have had the courage to do so. It takes courage to have courage. Now is the time to stand up and demonstrate courage so that the American people will have confidence—confidence in what takes place here and to answer the questions that are left unanswered.

So by defeating the previous question today and voting to approve the Presidential Tax Transparency Act, Congress can create a pathway to the facts, and then the truth, that the American people have a right to know.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS), the former Orlando police chief, and my good friend.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I have taken three oaths in my lifetime. The first oath I took was in 1984, as a police officer, when I was sworn in at the Orlando Police Department. The second oath I took when I was sworn in as the chief of police. And the third when I became a Member of the 115th Congress.

Although different positions, each oath stated that I would protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that I have taken each oath very seriously.

I know former FBI Director James Comey understood the enormity of the oath he took to uphold the Constitution to seek the truth, regardless of outside influences or political circumstances. His loyalty is to the United States Constitution.

The American people should have faith that no one—that includes the President, the U.S. Attorney General, and the Deputy U.S. Attorney General—should be able to interfere with the proper functioning of the FBI or its work with local and State law enforcement agencies. It is the responsibility of Congress to ensure that all our law enforcement and intelligence agencies are able to fulfill their mission: to protect and defend the United States and enforce criminal laws as appropriate.

I filed an amendment with the Rules Committee that would prohibit the removal of the FBI Director, except for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment would insulate the FBI's mission from political influences and agendas. Unfortunately, it appears that the Republican leadership doesn't think that this is a good idea, or simply does not want to have this debate.

The rule reported from the Rules Committee prevents me from offering this important amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, if the FBI Director is abiding by the oath he took, then he should not be removed.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to remind everyone, as we have discussed here and we hear impassioned arguments for amendments that were not germane, find proper places to put amendments, and find bills that you want to write. That is all fair. That is in our rule book. But remember, the only germane amendment was made in order. I repeat, the only germane amendment was made in order.

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

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

As the gentleman knows, we grant necessary waivers for amendments all the time. It is a very routine thing. So to argue it is not germane, the Rules Committee can grant the necessary waivers for any of these amendments. And, frankly, these amendments are more germane to what the American people care about than the underlying bill.

Mrs. DEMINGS' amendment that states that the Director of the FBI may only be removed for inefficiency or neglect of duty or misuse of office, what could be more germane to the concerns of the American people than that? All it would have taken was granting necessary waivers, as the Rules Committee does regularly on a number of bills when it suits their interests.

Another amendment from Representative KENNEDY was rejected to reinstate the authority to appoint independent counsel for purposes of an independent investigation.

One from Representative LAWRENCE was rejected to reinstate the authority for independent counsel.

Representative LIEU had an amendment to reinstate the authority for independent counsel to investigate and was not allowed.

Representative MOULTON had one.

So all of those amendments, even though they are more germane than any of the other items of what the American people care about, were, nevertheless, not granted the necessary waivers to be included in this bill.

The bill we are considering under this bill is highly problematic. It, frankly, serves to hurt the very people it purports to protect.

I know we all value the safety of our first responders and the safety of our communities. This bill would hurt the relationship police have with communities without any need. It is truly a solution in search of a problem.

This legislation would give Federal probation officers authority to arrest third parties, not the person that they are working with on probation, the ability to arrest them without a warrant.

When referring to third parties, that means people who are not under the authority of the police officer. It could mean a mother of someone on probation, a roommate, somebody who shares a house, and somebody doesn't want the probation officer to come into their room because the probation officer doesn't have a warrant, even if the parolee is in a different room.

We need to remember that an individual, of course, gives up some of their rights, including their Fourth Amendment rights, as a condition of probation. But not everybody who comes into contact with that person also should be required to give up their Fourth Amendment rights. The mother in this example has not given up those constitutional rights, which read: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause. . . ."

And simply being a roommate or a family member of somebody who is on probation should not mean you lose your constitutional rights as an American citizen.

If in this example the mother doesn't want the probation officer to enter her room, she has that right, unlike the parolee. But this bill would change the dynamics and allow the probation officer to say she was interfering and arrest her, something that likely violates her Fourth Amendment protections and would be overturned by the courts.

This would make family and friends of individuals entering probation from prison scared of allowing the person on probation to live in their homes. This could lead to increased recidivism and increased crime. It will create a huge hindrance to the probation system and the goal of successfully encouraging people to reenter society and avoid breaking the law.

If people don't have a family member or friend to live with, successful reentry becomes harder and almost impossible. We need to remember that probation officers are part of the judicial branch, but police are members of the executive branch. Not only does this legislation complicate that, but it is a violation of separation of powers.

When an individual is granted probation, as a condition of that probation they give up certain rights, and that is

understandable, and under the authority and supervision of the judicial branch in doing so. Third parties have not made that agreement with the judicial branch. They are not their jurisdiction. They are not adjudicated by the judicial branch. And probation officers should not have the authority to arrest them without a warrant provided by an officer of the peace.

However, even if we don't care about the constitutional rights of citizens, which I certainly hope we care about, we should care about the fact that this bill would reduce the safety of our probation officers. This legislation creates a very unsafe situation for our probation officers who are not trained in law enforcement.

On average, a Federal probation officer completes six weeks of training. That is compared to 21 weeks of training and 3 weeks of field for a police officer. That is simply not the same level of training.

With the disparity, doesn't it make sense for probation officers to use the assistance of police when they actually do need to arrest an uncooperative third party or serve a warrant based on probable cause?

With additional police powers come more likelihood people could be put in harm's way, and that is the opposite of what we want for someone who doesn't have the proper training.

I also want to talk about why the bill is so bad. In many ways, I asked myself the question: What problem are we trying to solve? Even if we look at the associations that are pushing for this legislation, the data just doesn't show that there is a need or that this would be a productive step towards either keeping our communities safer—and this bill would also put the lives of our probation officers at risk.

In a letter earlier this year, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association stated that "formal arrests by probation officers are rare." And 2015 data shows that, of the 987 searches conducted, only 30 uncooperative third parties, and even less arrests.

With so few incidents, it is, frankly, better for probation officers to call or use the assistance of well-trained police officers, if needed. That is the answer.

The proponents of this bill claim they have brought the bill forward at the request of our first responders. But the request was not even close to unanimous.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter signed by officers, chiefs of police, probation officers, and other first responders in opposition to the bill.

MAY 16, 2017.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: We are current or retired law enforcement officers concerned about public safety, constitutional policing practices, and building trust between law enforcement and the communities we serve. In light of Police Week, some Members of Congress have sponsored bills that would increase incarceration rates, enhance penalties for certain crimes, and, ultimately, weaken relationships between communities and police departments.

The idea that “law and order” has declined in the previous decade does a disservice to the law enforcement officers who have taken oaths to protect and serve their local communities. Those officers deserve programs and policies that fund critical training, enhance important policing skills that improve officer and public safety, and offer technical assistance and operational support. We are deeply troubled by recent legislative and executive actions that support this divisive “law and order” rhetoric and that chip away at our hard-fought efforts to sustain long-term trust between our communities and law enforcement agencies.

As officers who have handled high-profile incidents and routine investigations, we know that keys to success are strong leadership and morale, officer training and accountability, and community trust and engagement. Below, we offer several recommendations based upon these principles.

Programs that support mental health services for officers. A number of law enforcement agencies are increasingly recognizing the importance of regular mental health checks, crisis hotlines, peer mentoring programs, and other mental health services to alleviate the stress and trauma that officers face.

Policies and programs for de-escalation and crisis intervention training. As a result of such training, law enforcement agencies learn to apply strategies that reduce the likelihood of force-related incidents. De-escalation training is essential to reducing the number of violent confrontations between law enforcement and communities, as well as increasing methods for age appropriate responses when interacting with youth to improve their safety and well-being in communities. These trainings promote best practices and, as a result, reduce the risk of injury to police officers and members of the community.

Policies that promote crisis intervention training incorporating the services of mental health professionals. Such professionals can assist officers in identifying and responding to a person impacted by mental illness, an intoxicating substance, or emotional distress. The public safety benefits resulting from this training are well-documented and broadly supported by policing and public safety experts.

Programs that assist officers with understanding the effects of systemic trauma and better deal with the aftermath of trauma. Trauma sensitivity or trauma informed training can help officers identify individuals showing signs of trauma related behaviors, which may include: aggression; difficulty processing information; impulsiveness; heightened fight, flight, or freeze response; and hypersensitivity to noise or physical contact. Training can help law enforcement avoid interpreting such behaviors as requiring more aggression or use of force and, instead, guide officers to respond in a more informed and appropriate manner.

Policies and programs that incorporate implicit bias training into police training at all levels. Implicit bias training helps police officers mitigate racial bias during community interactions, encourage respectful encounters, and promote constitutional policing with the goal of building trust with communities.

Programs that collect data on deaths and use-of-force incidents by law enforcement. Specifically, we encourage you to support the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Use-of-Force Data Collection Program, which expands the Uniform Crime Report Program to include use of force incidents by law enforcement resulting in serious bodily injury. The Death in Custody Reporting Act, which was signed into law in 2014, must also be properly implemented.

Support the Collaborative Reform Initiative of the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The Collaborative Reform Initiative is a valuable program that offers technical assistance and operational support to local police departments to improve policing practices, transparency, professionalism, accountability, community inclusion, and procedural fairness. The Collaborative Reform Initiative enables police departments—which participate on a voluntary basis—to sustain longterm, significant reforms in a manner that improves trust between police and communities and meets the public safety goals of residents. The work of DOJ’s Civil Rights Division around policing must also be supported and sustained.

During Police Week, we urge you to prioritize federal programs, funding, and legislation that support the above policies, rather than legislation that would undercut partnerships with our local communities. We invite you to reach out to us about the above priorities and ask that you support legislation and funding that champion these important issues.

Sincerely,

Hassan Aden, Police Chief (Ret.), Greenville (NC) Police Department; Chief James Abbott, West Orange (NJ) Police Department; Officer Nick Bucci (Ret.), New Jersey State Police; Sheriff Jerry L. Clayton, Washtenaw County (MI) Sheriff’s Office; Captain James Davidsaver (Ret.), Lincoln (NE) Police Department; Deputy Chief Stephen Downing (Ret.), Los Angeles Police Department; Former Probation/Parole Officer and Corrections Counselor Shelley Fox-Loken, Oregon; Major Neill Franklin (Ret.), Baltimore and Maryland State Police Department; Officer Brian Gaughan (Ret.), Davenport, Iowa and Chicago; Lieutenant Commander Diane Goldstein (Ret.), Redondo Beach Police Department.

Ron Hampton, Community Relations Officer, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department (Ret.); Blacks in Law Enforcement of America; Officer Karen Hawke (Ret.), Massachusetts State Police; Former Federal Corrections Officer Regina Hufnagel, Boston, Massachusetts; Commissioner Terence Inch (Ret.), Hellam Township (PA) Police Department; Senior Patrol Officer Tim Johnson (Ret.), Madison (OH) Township Police Department; Commissioner George Kain, Ph.D., Ridgefield (CT) Board of Police Commissioners; Analyst Richard Kennedy (Ret.), Central Intelligence Agency; Chief Larry Kirk (Ret.), Old Monroe (MO) Police Department; Former Special Agent David Long, U.S. Department of Labor; Former Detective and Deputy Sheriff Nick Morrow, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

Lieutenant Joanne Naughton (Ret.), New York Police Department; Chief Norm Stampfer (Ret.), Seattle (WA) Police Department; Special Agent Ray Strack (Ret.), Department of Homeland Security, Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Former Police Officer Silvestre Tanenbaum, Carrollton (TX) Police Department; Sergeant Carl Tennenbaum (Ret.), San Francisco Police Department; Former Detention Officer and Deputy Marshal Jason Thomas, Prowers County, Colorado; Detective James Trainum (Ret.), Washington Metropolitan Police Department; Deputy Sheriff Darren Ullmann, Cowlitz County (OR) Sheriff’s Office; Federal Probation Officer LeRoy Washington (Ret.), Hawaii; Officer Jack Wilborn (Ret.), Glendale (AZ) Police Department; Detective Howard Wooldridge (Ret.), Michigan.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, as they state, in part, in the letter: “We are deeply troubled by recent legislative and executive actions that support this

divisive ‘law and order’ rhetoric and that chip away at our hard-fought efforts to sustain long-term trust between our communities and law enforcement agencies.”

This letter is signed by many current and former police chiefs, sheriffs, and other law enforcement officials.

In the letter that I included in the RECORD, which will now appear for the world to see, law enforcement professionals say that instead of pushing forward with this bill that we are being asked to consider under a closed and restrictive rule, we should focus on mental health and trauma services for officers to support them, programs and policies for de-escalation and crises intervention training, better staffing for our police agencies and probation officers, programs and policies that incorporate implicit bias training into police training and probation office training, and community-oriented policing. These are the types of policies that Democrats, and myself, would love to put forward during National Police Week to support our law enforcement professionals and to keep our communities safe.

Why aren’t we focusing on those kinds of ideas, rather than a solution in search of a problem?

It is National Police Week, and we should be supporting legislation that protects and supports our police, not create a greater schism between our community and police through an unconstitutional bill that puts the lives of our probation officers at risk, and will likely increase recidivism among those on probation.

□ 1300

We can do better. That is why I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on this rule and to vote “no” on the underlying legislation.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time, and I appreciate the debate today. Also, I feel, in just a little bit of ways, I am sort of Alice in Wonderland here; what is up is down and what is down is up. I am not sure how you take this bill to, number one, say that probation officers would be any more in danger.

I would also, Mr. Speaker, like to include in the RECORD another letter that is from the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association in support of what is going on here.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

Cabin John, MD, May 17, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER AND LEADER PELOSI: I am writing on behalf of the nearly 27,000 members of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association to advise you of our

strong support for H.R. 1039, the "Probation Officer Protection Act," and to express our appreciation for the Congress's consideration of this important officer safety measure during National Police Week. FLEOA opposes the amendment that will be offered on the floor to sunset the authority provided by the bill, as you cannot put a stopwatch on critical law enforcement officer protection measures such as H.R. 1039.

The "Probation Officer Protection Act" is a critical officer safety measure. At a time when U.S. Probation Officers have seen their workloads increase due to changes in sentencing policy and are being asked to "do more with the same," ensuring that they have the means to protect themselves when placed in harm's way is paramount. H.R. 1039 will fully authorize a U.S. Probation Officer to arrest any third party who violates 18 USC 111. This statute has been on the books since the 1940s and makes it a crime for any person to forcibly assault, resist, intimidate, or interfere with any federal officer in the performance of their official duties. Current law, however, only allows Probation Officers to make arrests of individuals on probation or under supervised release who violate 18 USC 111. This authority does not extend to "third parties," which could include a former associate of the offender or an unidentified member of the community. In many instances third parties are well aware that a federal officer's authority is limited to individuals on supervision, and when a third party does impede or assault a U.S. Probation Officer, the Officer's only recourse is to retreat and call for local law enforcement. While in major cities local law enforcement may respond depending on availability, the same is not true for U.S. Probation Officers who work in rural communities where response by local law enforcement may be a single officer or none. This places Probation Officers at even greater risk, particularly in those situations where retreat is not even a reasonably safe alternative.

During the forthcoming debate on this bill, there will undoubtedly be those who go to great lengths to demean U.S. Probation Officers as something less than "real" law enforcement officers or to diminish the hazards that they face. Some may also raise inchoate objections about the constitutionality of H.R. 1039. For example, you will hear that Congress cannot extend Executive Branch police powers to the Judicial Branch, despite the fact that it was Congress that established the U.S. Supreme Court Police that resides directly across the street from the U.S. Capitol. Not only are such statements factually inaccurate, they display a basic lack of understanding about those who serve our nation as U.S. Probation Officers and the purposes behind the "Probation Officer Protection Act."

Make no mistake: U.S. Probation Officers are fully trained federal law enforcement officers. They attend basic training at the National Training Academy at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Charleston, SC, and receive ongoing in-service training throughout the year. Their training covers everything from firearms regulation and safety and defensive tactics to handcuffing, the use of force, de-escalation training, and reality-based scenario training. It may be difficult for some to acknowledge, but there is an inherent risk to the work U.S. Probation Officers do—a risk that often outweighs that of traditional law enforcement. They do not enter into sterile offices, but often into environments that are uncertain. They are required to have frequent and regular contacts in the home and community and knowingly come into daily contact with individuals who have a history of violence, mental health issues, problems with authority, and

troubles with substance abuse. U.S. Probation Officers are not able to anticipate what is going to occur during all contacts. There are and have been occasions when U.S. Probation Officers are threatened and/or attacked by third parties and they need the ability to take an affirmative step to protect themselves.

U.S. Probation Officers are a unique profession. They have a knowledge base in law and human behavior, and a mix of skills in investigation, communication, and analysis. They strive to make our communities safer, to make a positive difference in the lives of those they serve, and promote fairness in process and excellence in service. But as the volume of approved searches they must conduct has markedly increased over the past year due to changes in sentencing policy, the absence of any authority to restrain or direct the movements of third parties places U.S. Probation Officers at a greater and unnecessary risk of physical harm. H.R. 1039 provides a modest expansion of U.S. Probation Officers' existing arrest authority to cover only violations of 18 USC 111. It does not in any way provide them "peace officer" status or grant them the same general arrest authority that state-level probation officers enjoy in many jurisdictions. Granting U.S. Probation Officers the authority to arrest third parties would not change who they are and what they are seeking. Nor will it interfere with or otherwise diminish U.S. Probation Officers' use of the de-escalation techniques that are the hallmark of their profession. It would simply afford them another tool, another avenue, if ever needed.

In the end, this legislation will enhance officer safety while also protecting probationers and third parties by preventing obstruction from escalating to actual violence. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this legislation and for helping U.S. Probation Officers do their job more safely by passing H.R. 1039, the "Probation Officer Protection Act."

Sincerely,

NATHAN R. CATURA,
National President.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I think what is interesting here is I can't really, frankly, understand sort of the shade, I guess, or the dismissiveness that is being thrown on probation officers and their lack of training, which is 6 weeks plus 40 hours additional, which is subject to their job.

The evidence that was presented here, the example of the person not wanting a search, many times a probation officer will come with a search warrant that will allow them to search anywhere. But even in the case of the lady who did not want her room searched, the bill specifically says forcible impeding, which is already discussed and talked about in law.

Also, any officer who witnesses a crime or is being attacked does not have to have a warrant to make an arrest. So, I mean, it is really interesting to me why we are discussing a bill and doing so in such a way for which there are actual instances where this takes place.

My friend said, well, it only happens a very few times. My question for this, as a son of a State trooper, if his name was Leonard Collins and he was actually going to do this, I would say that one matters, even if it is the only one—lives of these probation officers, one.

So why we are doing this, I am not really sure. Why we would oppose this, I am not really sure.

You can make stretched arguments here, but when a probation officer goes in and, in the words of the bill, is forcibly intimidated, impeded, attacked, they can arrest the person there who they have already had training in how to arrest. I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, how you can make a good argument about that. You can try.

There will be debate here in just a few minutes, which this rule gives, because I would encourage voting "no" on the previous question and voting "yes" on this rule.

But there is also another issue that I do want to address. In this majority, since this majority has been in control, there has never been a waiver for germaneness on a floor amendment. Germaneness matters. So, again, find the proper place.

As we go forward, as we look, at least in my time here, this is one of the simple, straightforward issues. You are protecting and giving a chance for those probation officers who encounter something that most in this body now, in our current jobs, maybe in previous, have not had to face.

So the question for me today is simply this. It makes sense as a common-sense update. Support it. It enables them to carry out their job, protecting themselves.

The underlying bill simply provides additional resources for probation officers to protect themselves while, at the same time, freeing up the demands of other law enforcement officers in the area. When we understand the commitment that they make, I do not understand making legal sidestep arguments of hypotheticals that may or may not exist to say we should not give them another tool in their toolbox.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 324 OFFERED BY
MR. POLIS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 305) to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the disclosure of certain tax returns by Presidents and certain candidates for the office of the President, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the respective chairs and ranking minority members of the Committees on Ways and Means and Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered

on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 305.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment

or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. 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 question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 2:15 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1415

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at 2 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 324; and

Adopting House Resolution 324, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1039, PROBATION OFFICER PROTECTION ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 324) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1039) to amend section 3606 of title 18, United States Code, to grant probation officers authority to arrest hostile third parties who obstruct or impede a probation officer in the performance of official duties, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 226, nays 188, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 263]

YEAS—226

Abraham	Gohmert	Nunes
Aderholt	Goodlatte	Olson
Allen	Gosar	Palazzo
Amash	Gowdy	Palmer
Amodel	Granger	Paulsen
Arrington	Graves (GA)	Pearce
Babin	Graves (LA)	Perry
Bacon	Graves (MO)	Poe (TX)
Banks (IN)	Griffith	Poliquin
Barletta	Grothman	Posey
Barr	Guthrie	Ratcliffe
Barton	Harper	Reed
Bergman	Harris	Reichert
Biggs	Hartzler	Renacci
Bilirakis	Hensarling	Rice (SC)
Bishop (MI)	Herrera Beutler	Roby
Bishop (UT)	Hice, Jody B.	Roe (TN)
Black	Higgins (LA)	Rogers (AL)
Blackburn	Hill	Rogers (KY)
Blum	Holding	Rohrabacher
Bost	Hollingsworth	Rooney, Francis
Brady (TX)	Hudson	Ros-Lehtinen
Brat	Huizenga	Roskam
Bridenstine	Hultgren	Ross
Brooks (AL)	Hunter	Rothfus
Brooks (IN)	Hurd	Rouzer
Buchanan	Issa	Royce (CA)
Buck	Jenkins (KS)	Russell
Bucshon	Jenkins (WV)	Rutherford
Budd	Johnson (LA)	Sanford
Burgess	Johnson (OH)	Scalise
Byrne	Jordan	Schweikert
Calvert	Joyce (OH)	Scott, Austin
Carter (GA)	Katko	Sensenbrenner
Carter (TX)	Kelly (MS)	Shimkus
Chabot	Kelly (PA)	Shuster
Cheney	King (IA)	Simpson
Coffman	King (NY)	Smith (MO)
Collins (GA)	Kinzinger	Smith (NE)
Collins (NY)	Kustoff (TN)	Smith (NJ)
Comer	Labrador	Smith (TX)
Comstock	LaHood	Smucker
Conaway	LaMalfa	Stefanik
Cook	Lamborn	Stewart
Costello (PA)	Lance	Stivers
Cramer	Latta	Taylor
Culberson	Lewis (MN)	Tenney
Curbelo (FL)	LoBiondo	Thompson (PA)
Davidson	Long	Thornberry
Davis, Rodney	Loudermilk	Tiberi
Denham	Love	Tipton
Dent	Lucas	Trott
DeSantis	Luetkemeyer	Turner
DesJarlais	MacArthur	Upton
Diaz-Balart	Marchant	Valadao
Donovan	Marino	Wagner
Duffy	Marshall	Walberg
Duncan (SC)	Massie	Walden
Duncan (TN)	Mast	Walker
Dunn	McCarthy	Walorski
Emmer	McCaul	Walters, Mimi
Estes (KS)	McClintock	Weber (TX)
Farenthold	McHenry	Webster (FL)
Faso	McKinley	Wenstrup
Ferguson	McMorris	Westerman
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers	Williams
Fleischmann	McSally	Wilson (SC)
Flores	Meadows	Wittman
Fortenberry	Meehan	Womack
Fox	Messer	Woodall
Franks (AZ)	Mitchell	Yoder
Frelinghuysen	Moolenaar	Yoho
Gaetz	Mooney (WV)	Young (AK)
Gallagher	Mullin	Young (IA)
Garrett	Murphy (PA)	Zeldin
Gibbs	Noem	

NAYS—188

Adams	Blumenauer	Bustos
Aguilar	Blunt Rochester	Butterfield
Barragan	Bonamici	Capuano
Bass	Boyle, Brendan	Carbajal
Beatty	F.	Cardenas
Bera	Brady (PA)	Carson (IN)
Beyer	Brown (MD)	Cartwright
Bishop (GA)	Brownley (CA)	Castor (FL)

Castro (TX)	Jackson Lee	Perlmuter	Blackburn	Hartzler	Pearce	Jackson Lee	Matsui	Schakowsky
Chu, Judy	Jayapal	Peters	Blum	Hensarling	Perry	Jayapal	McColum	Schiff
Ciilline	Jeffries	Peterson	Bost	Herrera Beutler	Poe (TX)	Jeffries	McGovern	Schneider
Clark (MA)	Johnson (GA)	Pingree	Brady (TX)	Hice, Jody B.	Poliquin	Johnson (GA)	McNerney	Schrader
Clarke (NY)	Johnson, E. B.	Pocan	Brat	Higgins (LA)	Posey	Johnson, E. B.	Meeks	Scott (VA)
Clay	Jones	Polis	Bridenstine	Hill	Ratcliffe	Kaptur	Meng	Scott, David
Cleaver	Kaptur	Price (NC)	Brooks (AL)	Hollingsworth	Reed	Keating	Moore	Serrano
Clyburn	Keating	Quigley	Brooks (IN)	Hudson	Reichert	Kelly (IL)	Moulton	Sewell (AL)
Cohen	Kelly (IL)	Raskin	Buchanan	Huizenga	Renacci	Kennedy	Murphy (FL)	Shea-Porter
Connolly	Kennedy	Rice (NY)	Buchanan	Hultgren	Rice (SC)	Khanna	Nadler	Sherman
Conyers	Khanna	Richmond	Bucshon	Hunter	Roby	Kihuen	Neal	Sinema
Cooper	Kihuen	Rosen	Budd	Hurd	Roe (TN)	Kildee	Nolan	Sires
Correa	Kildee	Roybal-Allard	Burgess	Issa	Rogers (AL)	Kilmer	Norcross	Slaughter
Costa	Kilmer	Ruiz	Byrne	Jenkins (KS)	Rogers (KY)	Kind	O'Rourke	Smith (WA)
Courtney	Kind	Ruppersberger	Calvert	Jenkins (WV)	Rohrabacher	Krishnamoorthi	Pallone	Soto
Crist	Krishnamoorthi	Rush	Carter (GA)	Johnson (LA)	Rokita	Kuster (NH)	Panetta	Suozi
Crowley	Kuster (NH)	Ryan (OH)	Carter (TX)	Johnson (OH)	Rooney, Francis	Langevin	Payne	Takano
Cuellar	Langevin	Sánchez	Chabot	Jones	Ros-Lehtinen	Larsen (WA)	Pelosi	Thompson (CA)
Cummings	Larsen (WA)	Sarbanes	Cheney	Jordan	Roskam	Larsen (CT)	Perlmutter	Thompson (MS)
Davis (CA)	Larson (CT)	Schakowsky	Coffman	Joyce (OH)	Ross	Lawrence	Peters	Titus
Davis, Danny	Lawrence	Schiff	Collins (GA)	Katko	Rothfus	Lawson (FL)	Peterson	Tonko
DeFazio	Lawson (FL)	Schneider	Collins (NY)	Kelly (MS)	Rouzer	Lee	Pingree	Torres
DeGette	Lee	Schrader	Comer	Kelly (PA)	Royce (CA)	Levin	Pocan	Tsongas
Delaney	Levin	Scott (VA)	Comstock	King (IA)	Russell	Lewis (GA)	Polis	Vargas
DeLauro	Lewis (GA)	Scott, David	Conaway	King (NY)	Rutherford	Lieu, Ted	Price (NC)	Veasey
DelBene	Lieu, Ted	Serrano	Cook	Kinzing	Sanford	Lipinski	Quigley	Vela
Demings	Lipinski	Sewell (AL)	Costello (PA)	Knight	Scalise	Loeb sack	Raskin	Velázquez
DeSaulnier	Loeb sack	Shea-Porter	Cramer	Kustoff (TN)	Schweikert	Lofgren	Rice (NY)	Visclosky
Deutch	Lofgren	Sherman	Culberson	Labrador	Scott, Austin	Lowenthal	Richmond	Walz
Dingell	Lowenthal	Sinema	Curbelo (FL)	LaHood	Sensenbrenner	Lowe	Rosen	Wasserman
Doggett	Lowe	Sires	Davidson	LaMalfa	Shimkus	Lujan Grisham,	Roybal-Allard	Schultz
Doyle, Michael	Lujan Grisham,	Slaughter	Davis, Rodney	Lamborn	Shuster	M.	Ruiz	Waters, Maxine
F.	M.	Smith (WA)	Denham	Lance	Simpson	Luján, Ben Ray	Ruppersberger	Watson Coleman
Ellison	Luján, Ben Ray	Soto	Dent	Latta	Smith (MO)	Lynch	Rush	Welch
Engel	Lynch	Suozi	DeSantis	Lewis (MN)	Smith (NE)	Maloney,	Ryan (OH)	Wilson (FL)
Eshoo	Maloney,	Takano	DesJarlais	LoBiondo	Smith (NJ)	Carolyn B.	Sánchez	Yarmuth
Españillat	Carolyn B.	Thompson (CA)	Diaz-Balart	Long	Smith (TX)	Maloney, Sean	Sarbanes	
Esty (CT)	Maloney, Sean	Thompson (MS)	Donovan	Loudermilk	Smucker			
Evans	Matsui	Titus	Duffy	Love	Stefanik			
Foster	McColum	Tonko	Duncan (SC)	Lucas	Stewart	Boyle, Brendan	Gutiérrez	Pittenger
Frankel (FL)	McGovern	Torres	Duncan (TN)	Luetkemeyer	Stivers	F.	Holding	Rooney, Thomas
Fudge	McNerney	Tsongas	Dunn	MacArthur	Taylor	Chaffetz	Johnson, Sam	J.
Gabbard	Meng	Vargas	Emmer	Marino	Tenney	Cole	McEachin	Sessions
Gallego	Moore	Veasey	Estes (KS)	Marshall	Thompson (PA)	Crawford	Napolitano	Speier
Garamendi	Moulton	Vela	Farenthold	Faso	Thornberry	Franks (AZ)	Newhouse	Swalwell (CA)
Gonzalez (TX)	Murphy (FL)	Velázquez	Ferguson	McCarthy	Tiberi			
Gottheimer	Nadler	Visclosky	Fitzpatrick	McCaul	Tipton			
Green, Al	Neal	Walz	Fleischmann	McClintock	Trott			
Green, Gene	Nolan	Wasserman	Flores	McHenry	Turner			
Grijalva	Norcross	Schultz	Fortenberry	McKinley	Upton			
Hanabusa	O'Halleran	Waters, Maxine	Fox	McMorris	Valadao			
Hastings	O'Rourke	Watson Coleman	Frelinghuysen	Rodgers	Wagner			
Heck	Pallone	Welch	Gaetz	McSally	Walberg			
Higgins (NY)	Panetta	Wilson (FL)	Gallagher	Meadows	Walden			
Himes	Pascarell	Yarmuth	Garrett	Meehan	Walker			
Hoyer	Payne		Gibbs	Messner	Walorski			
Huffman	Pelosi		Gohmert	Mitchell	Walters, Mimi			

NOT VOTING—16

Chaffetz	McEachin	Rooney, Thomas
Cole	Meeks	J.
Crawford	Napolitano	Sessions
Gutiérrez	Newhouse	Speier
Johnson, Sam	Pittenger	Swalwell (CA)
Knight	Rokita	

□ 1438

So the previous question was ordered.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 230, noes 184, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 264]

AYES—230

Abraham	Babin	Bergman
Aderholt	Bacon	Biggs
Allen	Banks (IN)	Bilirakis
Amash	Barletta	Bishop (MI)
Amodei	Barr	Bishop (UT)
Arrington	Barton	Black

NOES—184

Adams	Clarke (NY)	Doggett
Aguilar	Clay	Doyle, Michael
Barragán	Cleaver	F.
Bass	Clyburn	Ellison
Beatty	Cohen	Engel
Bera	Connolly	Eshoo
Beyer	Conyers	Españillat
Bishop (GA)	Cooper	Esty (CT)
Blumenauer	Correa	Evans
Blunt Rochester	Costa	Foster
Bonamici	Courtney	Frankel (FL)
Brady (PA)	Crist	Fudge
Brown (MD)	Crowley	Gabbard
Brownley (CA)	Cuellar	Gallego
Bustos	Cummings	Garamendi
Butterfield	Davis (CA)	Gonzalez (TX)
Capuano	Davis, Danny	Green, Al
Carbajal	DeFazio	Green, Gene
Cárdenas	DeGette	Grijalva
Carson (IN)	Delaney	Hanabusa
Cartwright	DeLauro	Hastings
Castor (FL)	DelBene	Heck
Castro (TX)	Demings	Higgins (NY)
Chu, Judy	DeSaulnier	Himes
Ciilline	Deutch	Hoyer
Clark (MA)	Dingell	Huffman

NOT VOTING—16

Boyle, Brendan	Gutiérrez	Pittenger
F.	Holding	Rooney, Thomas
Chaffetz	Johnson, Sam	J.
Cole	McEachin	Sessions
Crawford	Napolitano	Speier
Franks (AZ)	Newhouse	Swalwell (CA)

□ 1447

So the resolution was agreed to.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, due to an unavoidable conflict, I missed the following votes on May 18. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 263 and “nay” on rollcall No. 264.

THIN BLUE LINE ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 115. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 323, I call up the bill (H.R. 115) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide additional aggravating factors for the imposition of the death penalty based on the status of the victim, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 323, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of

Rules Committee Print 115-17 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 115

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 “Thin Blue Line Act”.

SEC. 2. AGGRAVATING FACTORS FOR DEATH PENALTY.

Section 3592(c) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after paragraph (16) the following:

“(17) KILLING OR TARGETING OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—

“(A) The defendant killed or attempted to kill, in the circumstance described in subparagraph (B), a person who is authorized by law—

“(i) to engage in or supervise the prevention, detention, investigation, or prosecution, or the incarceration of any person for any criminal violation of law;

“(ii) to apprehend, arrest, or prosecute an individual for any criminal violation of law; or

“(iii) to be a firefighter or other first responder.

“(B) The circumstance referred to in subparagraph (A) is that the person was killed or targeted—

“(i) while he or she was engaged in the performance of his or her official duties;

“(ii) because of the performance of his or her official duties; or

“(iii) because of his or her status as a public official or employee.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

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

Mr. Speaker, Federal law provides a list of 16 aggravating factors a jury is required to consider when deciding whether a death sentence is warranted in a Federal capital case. These factors include whether the defendant acted in an especially heinous, cruel, or depraved manner; whether the defendant engaged in substantial planning and premeditation; whether the victim was particularly vulnerable; and whether the victim was a high public official.

High public official, as defined in the statute, includes a litany of high-ranking public persons from the President, to a foreign head of state, to a judge or law enforcement officer. Currently, however, the law only contains specific protections for Federal officers, not State and local officers.

H.R. 115, the Thin Blue Line Act, introduced by my colleague, Mr. BUCHANAN, amends Federal law to add the killing of a State or local law enforcement officer as an aggravating factor for a jury to determine during the sentencing phase of a trial, when the jury is considering whether a sentence of death is justified.

This legislation enjoys widespread support in the law enforcement community. And, Mr. Speaker, we can all understand why. In recent years, police officers across our Nation have laid down their lives in the service of their communities, often with little recognition or support.

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 17 police officers have already died as a result of gunfire this year. Most recently, 2 days ago, Deputy Sheriff Mason Moore of the Broadwater County, Montana, Sheriff's Office was shot and killed during a routine traffic stop. We honor Deputy Moore's sacrifice, which is a stark reminder of how a routine event can quickly turn fatal for an officer of the law.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is true that the scenarios where the provision in H.R. 115 applies may be limited. It is true that the vast majority of homicide cases are prosecuted in State courts. It is also true that the circumstances where a defendant killed a State or local law enforcement officer during the commission of a Federal capital offense are probably limited.

But H.R. 115 is, nevertheless, vitally important in the scenarios where it will apply—for example, in many terrorism cases. My colleagues may not remember that the terrorist who bombed the Boston Marathon also murdered an MIT police officer during their flight from the law. H.R. 115 would also apply to situations where a State or local officer is killed serving as a member of a Federal task force. And it would cover volunteer first responders, who are, of course, authorized by law to carry out their duties.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation sends a simple message: The stalking and killing of law enforcement officers will not be tolerated.

H.R. 115 is straightforward, common-sense legislation that will provide all the men and women of law enforcement, who serve and protect our communities every day, with the support they deserve.

As we conclude the 2017 National Police Week, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters in support of the bill.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.,
Alexandria, VA, January 5, 2017.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN BUCHANAN: On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I am writing to you to express our strong support for the Thin Blue Line Act.

NAPO is a coalition of police units and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement through legislative and legal advocacy, political action, and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, including the Florida Police Benevolent Association, 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers, and more than 100,000 citizens

who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement.

The Thin Blue Line Act increases penalties on those who harm or target for harm public safety officers by making the murder or attempted murder of a local police officer, firefighter, or first responder an aggravating factor in death penalty determinations.

This bill is critical, as law enforcement officer assaults, injuries, and deaths have increased sharply in recent years. In 2016 alone, ambush-style killings of law enforcement officers increased by 167 percent. Establishing stricter penalties for those who harm or target for harm law enforcement officers will deter crime. Any persons contemplating harming an officer must know that they will face serious punishments. NAPO strongly believes that increased penalties make important differences in the attitudes of criminals toward public safety officers, and ensure protection for the community.

We thank you for your continued support of the law enforcement community and we look forward to working with you to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON, ESQ., CAE,
Executive Director.

NATIONAL FRATERNAL
ORDER OF POLICE,
Washington, DC, 9 January 2017.

Hon. VERNON G. BUCHANAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BUCHANAN: I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong support for H.R. 115, the “Thin Blue Line Act.”

The “Thin Blue Line Act” increases the penalty for an individual who targets, kills, or attempts to kill a person who is a law enforcement officer, firefighter or any other public safety officer, while he or she was engaged in the performance of his or her official duties, because of the performance of his or her official duties, or because of his or her status as a public official or employee.

Law enforcement officers have always faced threats while on duty but within the past few years, officers have become a target for violence solely because of the uniform they wear. As you know, the FOP has called upon Congress to expand the current Federal hate crimes law to include law enforcement officers for this very reason.

Of the 63 deaths by gunfire suffered by law enforcement in 2016, 21 of them—that's 33%—were ambush killings. These were deliberate and sadly successful efforts by individuals who set out to kill a police officer:

The ambush attack against the Dallas Police Department; the deadliest day for law enforcement since 9/11 that saw 5 officers killed from gunfire;

The ambush attack against members of the Baton Rouge Police Department that saw 3 officers killed from gunfire;

The ambush attack against 2 Iowa police officers, Scott Martin and Anthony Bemino who were killed as they sat in their respective patrol cars;

Officer Thomas Cottrell of the Danville Police Department (OH) was killed by ambush.

All of these officers died because of the uniforms they were wearing. Those in our profession have always been in harm's way. It is our job to protect others but it should not be “part of the job” to be a target of someone who is looking simply to kill a cop. We do not accept that our uniforms alone make us targets because someone was driven to rage over a perceived injustice or desires to strike a blow against our civil government.

On behalf of more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I want to

thank you for introducing this legislation and amendment. If I can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

SERGEANTS BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION,
POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY
OF NEW YORK,

January 17, 2017.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BUCHANAN: I am writing on behalf of the more than 13,000 members of the Sergeants Benevolent Association of the New York City Police Department to advise you of our strong support for H.R. 115, the "Thin Blue Line Act."

For too long, members of the NYPD, along with law enforcement officers across this nation, have been targets. There has been a proliferation of groups and pundits impugning the motives and mission of law enforcement. They do so with no regard for the impact it has on our ability to protect life, property, and the freedoms we all hold dear. These constant attacks and the excessive, exaggerated rhetoric of anti-police elements have led some to declare an open season on police officers, and to welcome with cheers and praise the cowardly criminals who target law enforcement officers with acts of violence. We saw this first hand in New York City in December 2014, when Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were ambushed and senselessly murdered as they sat in their radio car on a Brooklyn street corner. Unfortunately, they are not alone. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, in 2016 there were 21 police officers killed in ambush-style attacks. Shockingly, 20 of these officers were killed in eight multiple-shooting death incidents—such as those that claimed the lives of 8 officers in Baton Rouge, LA and Dallas, TX—the highest total of any year since 1932.

It is for these reasons and many others that the legislation you have introduced is so important. The "Thin Blue Line Act" would make the murder or attempted murder of police officers, prosecutors, firefighters, and other first responders at any level of government an aggravating factor in federal death penalty determinations. The bill applies to things like the interstate homicide of an officer, and is applicable whether the officer is murdered on duty, because of the performance of their duty, or because of their status as a public official. While we know that law enforcement officers will continue to be targets, regardless of their uniform and whether they are on duty or off, active or retired, this legislation sends the message that any action to target law enforcement officers for murder or violence will be met with the harshest of penalties. And that is a message that is long overdue.

On behalf of the membership of our organization, thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you to see it swiftly enacted into law.

Sincerely,

ED MULLINS,
President.

MAJOR COUNTY SHERIFFS
OF AMERICA,
April 25, 2017.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN BUCHANAN: I write to you today on a matter of significant impor-

tance to the Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA) and all of America's law enforcement professionals. MCSA is an association of elected Sheriffs representing the Nation's largest counties with populations of 500,000 or more. Collectively, we represent more than 100 million Americans.

As Vice President in charge of Government Affairs for the MCSA, I am pleased to express our association's support of your legislation, the Thin Blue Line Act. This legislation would make the murder of law enforcement officers, firefighters and other first responders an aggravating factor in capital punishment determinations.

In 2016, one hundred forty-four officers died in the line of duty and to date, line of duty deaths are up 10 percent. The targeting of law enforcement officers is unconscionable and those who commit such heinous acts should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Law enforcement officers and other first responders have the right to go home to their families at the end of their shifts.

The Thin Blue Line Act is a step in the right direction and your work on this legislation is sincerely appreciated. We value your support and look forward to working with you in the future.

MICHAEL J. BOUCHARD,
Sheriff, Oakland County (MI),
Vice President—Government Affairs.

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

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

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, though troubled and saddened by the recent attacks on law enforcement officials, I believe that H.R. 115, the Thin Blue Line Act, is counterproductive to ensuring public safety and only serves to exacerbate concerns with the unfair and unjust death penalty.

H.R. 115 expands the list of statutory aggravating factors in Federal death penalty cases to also include killing or targeting a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or other first responder.

Aggravating factors are specific factors that judges and juries consider in determining whether a sentence of death is justified for the underlying offense. Passage of this bill would add a 17th statutory aggravating factor for Federal death penalty eligible offenses.

H.R. 115 has been rushed to the House floor, without a single hearing and without the opportunity to consider amendments directly relevant to whether our system of imposing the death penalty is fair, just, and reliable. Like most of my colleagues, I support measures that would actually protect our first responders, brave men and women who risk their lives every day to protect us.

Unfortunately, H.R. 115 not only fails to do this but would also exacerbate problems with the Federal death penalty.

First, H.R. 115 duplicates Federal and State laws that enhance sentences of persons convicted of crimes of violence against law enforcement. The very law the bill seeks to amend, 18 U.S.C. section 3592, already states that a crime against a high public official, including a judge, a law enforcement officer, or an employee of a United States penal or correctional institution, is an aggra-

vating factor that may be considered in determining whether a death sentence should be imposed.

Other Federal laws also impose a life sentence or death on persons convicted of killing State and local law enforcement officers, or other employees assisting with Federal investigations, as well as officers of the United States courts.

Secondly, H.R. 115 does not address documented and systemic unfairness and racial unfairness in the disposition of the death penalty. Any legislation dealing with the Federal death penalty must also address numerous concerns related to racial disparity in application of capital punishment, the lack of qualified counsel and sufficient resources to represent those facing the death penalty, and faulty forensic "science" testimony ordered in support of convictions in death penalty cases.

The Federal death penalty, in particular, is rife with troubling evidence of racial disparity. For example, 36 of the 61 people currently on Federal death row are African American, Latino, Asian, or Native American.

If you break this down by Federal circuit, the results are even more disturbing. For example, 15 of 18 men who have received a Federal death sentence in the Fifth Circuit—Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi—in the modern era have been people of color.

Third, civil rights and civil liberties organizations oppose H.R. 115. Organizations committed to the protection of civil rights and civil liberties, including the NAACP, ACLU, and the LCCR, have noted that the Thin Blue Line Act "is an unnecessary and misguided attempt to politicize the unfortunate deaths of law enforcement officers and could ultimately exacerbate existing tension between law enforcement and the communities they served."

□ 1500

And finally, H.R. 115 will not deter violence against police officers. By adding a 17th aggravating factor to the Federal death penalty statute, this legislation ignores scientific research regarding the ineffectiveness of capital punishment as a deterrent to crime.

It is important to note that the National Research Council of the National Academies has concluded that the studies claiming that the death penalty has a deterrent effect on murder rates are "fundamentally flawed" and should not be the basis of sound public policy.

Accordingly, I urge all of my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BUCHANAN), the chief sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman for

yielding and for his incredible support for our Nation's law enforcement officers.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Thin Blue Line Act, legislation I have introduced to support our Nation's brave police officers, firefighters, and first responders.

This week, we recognize National Police Week, a time to reflect on the very professional service of our law enforcement officers and their families. It is also a time to honor the lives of those brave officers who were killed in the line of duty and made the ultimate sacrifice.

It is really a sad reality that attacks against law enforcement officers have skyrocketed in recent years. Their entire community endured an especially difficult and heartbreaking 2016. In fact, in the last year alone, police officer deaths from shootings have increased 56 percent, and ambush-style killings of law enforcement officers have increased a staggering 167 percent, nationally.

We need to send a very clear message: The intentional targeting and killing of our first responders will not be tolerated.

My bill, the Thin Blue Line Act, would make murder or attempted murder of a police officer, firefighter, or other first responder an aggravating factor in death penalty determinations. This bill will serve as a strong deterrent to anyone planning an attack against our brave men and women in uniform who protect and serve our communities.

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to police officers and first responders across the country. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to help our American heroes.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), a senior member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this legislation which would expand the death penalty by adding a 17th aggravating factor—killing or targeting a police officer, probation officer, or firefighter—to the list of 16 aggravating factors already on the books.

Mr. Speaker, I have the greatest respect for our Nation's public servants, our police, our firefighters, the men and women of the Armed Forces, our teachers, and our other government employees. They serve our Nation out of a sense of duty to our country and for the honor and privilege of helping others.

But I cannot, in good conscience, support the bill we have before us simply because its purported goal, though certainly not its result, is to protect our public safety officers. The legislation is unnecessary and duplicative since there are already extensive penalties at both the State and local level for the murder of law enforcement officers.

As we know, numerous studies have demonstrated that the death penalty is

not an effective deterrent to crime in any event. Numerous studies have shown that what enhances the deterrent is certainty and swiftness of punishment, not severity of punishment. Therefore, adding the death penalty as a punishment is unlikely to prevent future violence against our police and our firefighters.

In addition, I believe the bill is counterproductive to our goal of improving law enforcement and community relations.

If you oppose the death penalty, as I do, because, in many cases, there is no appropriate access to counsel, which we know; because the death penalty has racial disparities in its application, which we know; and because, as we have seen over the past many years, there is a strong possibility of a wrongful conviction leading to the untenable situation of putting an innocent person to death, and we know that this has been done in my State and others, then you should oppose this bill and any bill expanding application of the death penalty which will result in innocent men and women being executed. This bill does nothing to correct any of these issues.

If you oppose the death penalty on moral and religious grounds, perhaps because you believe that all life is sacred and that the State should not sanction death as a punishment, then you should oppose this bill as well.

There is another fundamental objection to this bill. It is one thing to impose a death penalty for murder, bad as that is, or for any crime; it is another thing to impose a death penalty for attempted murder. This bill imposes the death penalty for attempted murder of police, firefighters, and probation officers.

I am not aware that we have in the law, anywhere, a death penalty for an attempted crime; and here, we are establishing a death penalty for an attempt, an unsuccessful attempt. The bill imposes the death penalty on persons who "killed or attempted to kill."

So under this bill, if you aimed the gun, even if you did not hit the person or injure him in any way, the death penalty would be imposed. This is a fundamental change in the law for which we are given no reason at all.

The law has always recognized a distinction between a terrible act and an attempted terrible act. The attempted terrible act certainly should be punished, but not as severely as the accomplishment of the terrible act. Here, we are establishing a death penalty for an unsuccessful attempt to commit the crime, and no reason is given for this fundamental break with our legal traditions.

So, for all these reasons—this bill is unnecessary, duplicative, ineffective, counterproductive, and where it is new, excessive—I oppose this legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) will control the

time of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE).

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I would just briefly remind my colleague on the other side that this does not establish the death penalty for an attempted murder, as was just stated. There must be an underlying capital crime for which the defendant is convicted. That is what this bill does, and nothing more.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on July 7, 2016, while a demonstration was taking place in Dallas, Texas, and police officers were protecting the demonstrators, a sniper rang out shots. After the smoke cleared, five Dallas police officers were murdered, seven others were wounded, and civilians were wounded. The culprit was finally apprehended, and, because he would not give up without shooting, he was killed by the Dallas Police Department.

Ambush on police officers by citizens increased, for some reason, last year. Locally, in Houston, Texas, Chief Deputy Constable Clint Greenwood, a friend of mine, was walking into the courthouse at 7 a.m.; and as he is walking into the courthouse, a person comes up behind him and assassinates him, and he is killed. And that criminal was captured.

Attacks on law enforcement and all of the people that I mentioned were local or State police officers. They were not Federal officers.

Now, we talk about discrimination. Why does Federal law discriminate in punishment of outlaws in these type of death penalty situations by not allowing the same punishment if the person is a local or State police officer instead of a Federal police officer? I think that is wrong.

As stated by the other side, most cases are made by State or local officers, especially crimes of violence. What this bill does is not discriminate against police officers who are local or State because of their status in a death penalty case where an outlaw is charged with a capital offense, but it allows the outlaw to get the same punishment that an outlaw would get if they killed a Federal officer, which is the death penalty.

As a former judge for 22 years in criminal courts and a prosecutor, I believe in the death penalty, and here is the reason why: Some people deserve it. They deserve it for what they did, and that is why society should have the death penalty.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I hadn't planned to speak again, but a gentleman on the other side was just completely incorrect in what he said, and I have the bill here.

The bill does establish the death penalty for attempted killing, and here is

the language. The bill is very short. It says:

The law is amended by inserting after paragraph 16 the following:

Paragraph 17, killing or targeting of law enforcement officer.

A. The defendant killed or attempted to kill, in the circumstance described in subparagraph B, a police officer, etc.

And B says:

The circumstance referred to in subparagraph A is that the person was killed or targeted while he was engaged in performance of his duties, basically.

So this implies the death penalty lists, as an additional aggravating factor for the death penalty, someone who killed or attempted to kill a police officer, a probation officer, a firefighter while they were engaged in their duties—killed or attempted to kill. That is what it means when it says killing or targeting. Targeting means attempting to kill.

It is very clear. You cannot misread this. Maybe the drafter made a mistake, but it is very clear. This applies the death penalty to someone who kills or attempts to kill. It is the first instance I know of in the entire corpus of American law where an attempted murder, attempted killing, an attempted anything is given the death penalty.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I would just rise, once again, to correct my colleague. It is an aggravating factor that is to be considered by a jury as one of many factors postconviction.

So what you are saying is not 100 percent accurate. We can engage in semantics, but we will agree to disagree on that point.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY).

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud that the House, this week, is taking action to support our law enforcement officers and their families as we mark National Police Week.

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to law enforcement officers at all levels: State and local police officers, sheriffs, firefighters, first responders, and our Federal agents. They all put their lives on the line to keep this country and our communities safe.

Congress must always ensure that our law enforcement agencies have the proper tools and resources to get the job done, and I am honored to play a role in this important work through my service on the Judiciary Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee for Commerce, Justice, and Science.

But, Mr. Speaker, law enforcement officers need more than equipment and funding. They need our support. They need our support because they are under attack. The last few years have seen a disturbing uptick in the instances of police being targeted by violent criminals just because they are wearing a badge.

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, at

least 64 police officers were shot and killed in the line of duty last year, 21 of which were ambush-style killings. Attacks in Dallas, Baton Rouge, Chicago, and other places were chilling reminders of the dangers these brave individuals face when they go to work.

It is time to send a clear, strong message: If you kill a law enforcement officer, you will be brought to justice and punished to the full extent of the law. That is why I am proud to support H.R. 115, the Thin Blue Line Act.

Under current law, killing a Federal law enforcement officer is an aggravating factor when considering a death sentence for the offender, just as it should be. However, the same deterrent and prosecution is not extended to State and local police officers, firefighters, or first responders. The Thin Blue Line Act would change this by making the murder of local law enforcement an aggravating factor when considering a death sentence.

Mr. Speaker, had this provision been in place just 4 years ago, it would have applied to the Boston bombing case when the bombers killed a local campus officer. It would also apply when State and local officers serve on joint law enforcement task forces.

States all over the country are taking action to support law enforcement through stronger protection for officers and stricter penalties for criminals, and I believe Congress should do the same.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

□ 1515

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I must again correct the gentleman on the other side. The underlying title 18 is the criminal code. It lists a series of crimes and a series of penalties, and then you have a list of aggravating factors, which make the death penalty mandatory if any of them are present. There are 16 aggravating factors. This is number 17 and adds an aggravating factor; and when this aggravating factor is present, the death penalty is mandatory.

Among the things this aggravating factor says, is "attempt." So it is the first death penalty—for that matter, it is the first death penalty, mandatory or not, for an attempt, as opposed to an actual killing. Even if it weren't mandatory, we should not have a death penalty for an attempt. You should have a severe penalty, but a death penalty should be reserved for actual murder and such crimes, not for an attempt. Attempt is always punished more leniently than the actual accomplishment of the heinous act.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to correct my colleague. I guess we can do this all day, but I do actually have a copy of the criminal code in front of me, and I would refer him to 18 U.S.C. section 3591(b)(2), where it lists very specifi-

cally and expressly that attempts to kill are listed in the sentence of death.

I refer you to that provision, and it is not mandatory. The jury can determine whether the aggravating factors outweigh the mitigating factors, or in the absence of any mitigating factors, whether the aggravating factors alone justify a death sentence.

So I feel that we are engaging in an exercise of semantics, but it is important that we don't misportray what this bill would accomplish and what it would do.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ).

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the men and women of law enforcement whose selfless service to a noble cause fills me with humble gratitude.

Being a law enforcement officer requires more than training. It requires sacrifice, devotion, integrity, and honor. Most importantly, it requires an unshakeable faith in the value and importance in the rule of law.

What keeps our civil society from a descent into lawlessness and chaos? What separates civilization from savagery?

It is a thin blue line—these men and women of law enforcement, who give their blood, sweat, tears, and sometimes their lives in order to protect and serve communities; who make the country a safer place, one street, one neighborhood, and one community at a time.

As a society, our laws enshrine freedom, our security, and our liberty. They uphold America's promise of innate fairness. But for their service and devotion to our great Nation, our law enforcement officers are often criticized and scorned by some they serve. Yet, through it all, they continue to serve and protect.

Too often these brave men and women are targets of violence, which is why I support the Thin Blue Line Act. An attack on law enforcement is an attack on the freedom of the United States of America, and it cannot be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, some have spoken out in opposition to the death penalty in this discussion, and they would say only God can judge. And while that is true, certainly the United States Government can do a better job setting up the meeting.

So today I rise in support of heroes, and I hope my colleagues will do the same.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from Michigan for his yielding and for his leadership and for the pleasure that I have in working on the Judiciary Committee. Let me thank the chairman and Members as well, particularly working on the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee, of which this underlying bill comes to the floor on.

This is a very important week, Mr. Speaker. It is National Police Week. A number of our constituents have been here, and we have had the opportunity to hear from a number of outstanding leaders: a sheriff from Los Angeles County; the sheriff from South Carolina; the police department leader from Houston, Texas; and the head of the FOP.

So I think that we have had a good week in terms of hearings in the Judiciary Committee, and certainly this past Monday we honored those who tragically ascended to the memorial wall where we honor police from across the Nation.

So I think it is important to put on the record that none of us, I would hope—I certainly don't—take a back seat to the respect, admiration, and the work that we do to keep our law enforcement and first responders safe. We commend them for their service as we continue to work on police and community working together.

We also are grateful for those who are engaged in enhanced community relations as well as working with diverse communities.

So let me acknowledge individuals from Houston that we have lost: Assistant Deputy Chief Clint Greenwood; Officer Richard K. Martin; Harris County Sheriff's Deputy Darren Goforth.

We lost Jerry Ronald Walker of Little Elm Police Department.

Then officers who died in Dallas: Officer Brent Thompson, Sergeant Michael Smith, Senior Corporal Lorne Ahrens, Officer Patricio Zamarripa, and Officer Michael Krol.

I have had the chance to work with a number of chiefs of police, including Chief Lee P. Brown, one of the first police chiefs in Houston that I was able to work with as I began to engage publicly; Chief McClelland; now Chief Acevedo; and chiefs in-between.

I particularly thank them for working with the community during stressful times, during times when violence was evidenced out in the community; not against police, but against communities—keeping the peace, if you will, as we tried to work together.

So I support policies that are necessary, and I certainly support the idea of protecting our law enforcement. Of course, the underlying bill has that provision and indicates a protection of law enforcement officers. In actuality, it provides the opportunity for the protection as well as the utilization of the death penalty.

This particular legislation continues to want to add aggravating factors, making it 17. If we had a hearing and if we were able to determine that this would actually have an impact, there would be reason to at least have a vigorous debate over whether there is an impact or not.

But H.R. 115 is a duplicative bill and unnecessary because under 18 U.S.C. 3592(c), there already exists mechanisms that achieve the goal of punishing by death a defendant who kills a

law enforcement officer or first responder.

First of all, it should be stated that the bill is based upon underlying offenses, drug offenses. There is a whole myriad of actual laws that are Federal criminal offenses, and if a death occurs under that Federal criminal offense, then you are eligible for the death penalty.

Let me cite as an example the Boston Marathon terrorists act and the killing of the MIT officer who was killed. The Federal prosecutor was able to take that case to the Federal court and to pursue a death penalty because it was pursuant to a terrorist act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. The most heinous tragedy of those who were lost in 9/11, the mourning of firefighters, first responders, and law enforcement who lost their lives, certainly there is no doubt that that was a heinous terrorist act. If those terrorists had lived—there would have been firefighters and first responders included, and their deaths would have been, in essence, tried under the Federal death penalty; and those heinous perpetrators would have been tried, given capital punishment, if the jury had convicted them—there probably was no doubt—and ultimately might have seen their end through the exercise of the death penalty.

That is, I think, clearing up that we are standing here adding any measure of difference to this particular legislation. If the act falls under Federal criminal laws, you can be, or the murderer of you can be, in fact, charged with a Federal death penalty.

On the other hand, if you go into a burning building and, unfortunately, the owner of the building—or there is some unfortunate incident and you are shot as a firefighter, you do not fall under this statute. That is not a Federal offense, but you can fall under your State death penalty cases.

Why would we be concerned about this idea of additional death penalties?

Let me cite for you the case of *Buck v. Davis*, where the death penalty verdict was based merely on whether the defendant is likely to commit acts of violence in the future, and a psychologist opined that being Black did increase the probability. The trial court reasoned that: "introduction of any mention of race was de minimis." In other words, insignificant, completely ignoring that the largest number of individuals that go to their death are African Americans. Thank goodness for the Supreme Court and the reasoning of Chief Justice Roberts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Justice Roberts stated for the court in reversing the

lower court: "Some toxins can be deadly in small doses."

Likewise, in the *Gregg v. Georgia* case, decided after *Furman*, the court held that if death penalty is mandatory, such that no permission for mercy is granted, and where capital punishment is based on characteristics of the offender, then it is unconstitutional and "arbitrary and capricious."

The underlying bill has mandatory death penalties. It will cover first responders if they are killed pursuant to Federal crimes. We are standing here, not adding anything to the underlying bill. First responders are protected. Law enforcement are protected.

I would hate to see any of them lose their life, but under a Federal crime, their case will be tried as a death penalty case. In other instances, it will be tried by State law. We respect these heroes and sheroes. It is shameful if we use that to add another aggravating element to the death penalty, and continue to discriminate based on race.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to first acknowledge and commend the law enforcement community throughout our country that work tirelessly to help protect and serve our communities.

I especially want to thank Chief Acevedo for his leadership, commitment to Houston, and for his vision on unifying communities through police relations with the people they take an oath to serve and protect.

As we celebrate police week, I would like to take a moment to thank and honor all the officers that served selflessly and died in the line of duty.

Especially, Assistant Deputy Chief Clinton Greenwood of Harris County Constable's Office-Precinct 3, TX, died on 4/3/17;

Officer Richard K. Martin of Houston Police Dept., died on 5/18/15;

Deputy Sheriff of Harris County Sheriff office, Darren Goforth, 8/28/15;

And Detective Jerry Ronald Walker of Little Elm Police Dept., TX, died 1/17/17 and the five officers killed in Dallas, TX on 7/7/16—Brent Thompson, Sgt. Michael Smith, Sr. Corporal Lorne Ahrens, Officer Patrick Zamarripa, and Officer Michael Krol.

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge Houston's former Chief, Lee P. Brown who laid the strong foundation for HPD's strong community liaison practices with all communities; Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez; Alan Rosen, Harris County Constable, Precinct 1 and all of our other men and women in uniform.

I know personally the level of stress and challenges posed, because I have many friends that have and are currently serving my Congressional district in Houston and our country very well and with great distinction.

I support our policies that are necessary, so long as we are doing so with fairness, in accordance with our Constitution, and in a manner that is not duplicative of statutory measures already in place.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 115 imposes the death penalty for the killing or targeting of law enforcement officers, firefighters, and first responders as a 17th aggravated factor for homicide.

Although this bill is presented as a proposal to protect police officers and first responders, it does much more.

H.R. 115 is duplicative and unnecessary because under 18 U.S.C. 3592(c), there already exists mechanisms that achieve the goal of punishing by death, a defendant who kills a law enforcement officer or first responders.

Prosecutors are already armed with prosecutorial discretion to seek capital punishment in death penalty cases as demonstrated in the cases below:

U.S. v. Ronell Wilson—2 NY City detectives were killed during a gun sting operation. Defendant was sentenced to death.

U.S. v. Donzell McCauley—a Washington, DC police officer was killed and defendant received a sentence of life without parole.

U.S. v. Kenneth Wilk—a deputy sheriff was killed while attempting to serve a search warrant; defendant was sentenced to life without parole.

U.S. v. Kenneth Barrett—a state law enforcement officer was killed during a drug raid, defendant was sentenced to death.

LaShawn Casey, an undercover police officer was killed in a carjacking related to a drug transaction; a capital jury sentenced the defendant to life without the possibility of parole.

These cases illustrate that prosecutors have the discretion under the current law to seek the death penalty. By adding a 17th aggravated factor under the vague, arbitrary and capricious language of H.R. 115, we are heading down a dangerous path.

Please take note that the death toll of firefighters/first responders reported by the National Fire Protection Association illustrates a drastic decline in deaths overall, most of which were fire and accident related.

The statistics available do not support the need for this duplicative measure in H.R. 115.

This bill does nothing to protect our law enforcement or to ensure public safety; instead, it raises constitutional questions as to its validity because “targeting law enforcement” is substantially vague language that will subject many innocent lives to death, based purely on their desire to exercise their First Amendment rights about the well-documented racial disparity in treatment throughout our communities.

We must ensure that we do not create legislation of broad scope and vagueness that will have a chilling effect on an insular group.

H.R. 115 is laced with a discriminatory effect that will trigger strict scrutiny under the 14th Amendment, and open the gateway for draconian habeas laws.

This bill will create a slippery slope, further adding to recent turbulence caused by Attorney General Jeff Session’s memo and destroying whatever trust remains between law enforcement and communities.

This bill sends troubling messages around the world about how we view and measure life in America in this 21st century.

It is time to get serious about this epidemic and not hide behind vague language because ‘all’ lives matter, blue, black, brown, white.

Mr. Speaker, while some may say that any adverse effects of the bill before us are de minimis, and thus, will not severely impact the racial disparity found in the use of the death penalty, it is neither the amount of words in this bill nor the amount of time used to utter them that is significant; rather, it is the discriminatory effect that will result in communities disproportionately impacted by the death penalty.

Let us take for example, the case of *Buck v. Davis*, 580 U.S. ____ (2017) where the

death penalty verdict was based merely on ‘whether defendant is likely to commit acts of violence in the future’ and a psychologist opined that being black did increase the probability. The trial court reasoned that “introduction of any mention of race was de minimis,” in other words, insignificant.

As Chief Justice John Roberts stated for the Court in reversing the lower court; “Some toxins can be deadly in small doses.”

Likewise, in *Gregg v. GA*, which was decided after *Furman* (invalidated death penalty across the country), the court held if death penalty is mandatory, such that no permission for mercy is granted, and where capital punishment is based on characteristics of the offender, then it is unconstitutional and “arbitrary and capricious.”

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 115 is extremely deadly because it is arbitrary and capricious, imposing the death penalty based solely on the status of the victim.

The death penalty is already available both at the state and federal level and is reserved for matters of extraordinary circumstances.

While we want to ensure that law enforcement officers, firefighters and first responders received protection as they protect our communities, we cannot and should not attempt to do so by weighing the worth of lives and arbitrarily impose the death penalty based on our measuring sticks of who should live and who should die.

H.R. 115 will undoubtedly contribute to the continuation of well-documented and pervasive racial disparities in the imposition of the death penalty.

Since 1976 only 20 white prisoners have been executed for the murder of an African American victim, while an alarming 286 African American prisoners have been executed for the death of white victims, and 42% of African Americans currently remain on death row.

Death penalty generally, has been criticized over the years by legal scholars and by Supreme Court Justices who have opined in several instances, that ‘the death penalty violates the Eighth Amendment, which prohibits cruel and unusual punishment.’

Even in 1958, when the Court first explicitly spoke about the death penalty as having constitutional challenges, it said in *Trop v. Dulles*, “the Eighth Amendment’s Cruel and Unusual Punishment clause must draw its meaning from the ‘evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society’ rather than from its original meaning.”

Mr. Speaker, there is no argument that we have evolved and matured significantly since we first implemented the death penalty in the 1600s and thus, we must evaluate cautiously, laws that seek to further advance this flawed, astronomically costly and unjust practice.

Tax payers currently spend \$740,000 for cases without the death penalty, while cases where the death penalty is sought cost \$1.26 million. Maintaining each death row prisoner costs taxpayers \$90,000 more per year than a prisoner in general population.

Capital punishment does not work; it is discriminatory and is used disproportionately against the poor, minorities and members of racial, ethnic and religious communities.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976, 82% of all executions have occurred in the South (37% in Texas alone), which contributed to the United States status as one of five countries in the

world to account for the most executions in 2012.

FBI data has shown that the death penalty is not a deterrent and in fact, 14 states without capital punishment in 2008, had homicide rates at or below the national rate.

Taking another life does not stop violence.

Like mandatory minimums, public opinion for the death penalty is currently at its lowest with a 42% opposition, evidenced in a 2016 Pew Research report, which found that the U.S. now dropped to number seven worldwide in countries accountable for the most executions.

Mr. Speaker, over two-thirds of the world’s countries have abolished the death penalty either in law or practice, and the U.S. is the only Western country that still uses the death penalty.

Even family members of murder victims and other individuals who have witnessed live executions of death row inmates, particularly, in the recent botched and questionable executions, have called for a repeal of this practice and ask instead for alternative sentencing.

In fact the death penalty solves nothing, and may even perpetuate the suffering of the parents, children, or siblings left behind.

We do not need to expand the use of the death penalty where public opinion is at its lowest, but instead, implement sound and practical legislation that will save lives of our officers and the people they serve.

This measure is what public opinion suggests.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

There are two important very brief points for correction. I respect the gentlewoman from Texas, but she just suggested to us that this would be a duplicative law; thus, unnecessary because, as she cited the Federal criminal code, she says that law enforcement officers are already covered by the law.

However, I would refer her attention to 18 U.S.C. Section 3592(c)(14), and then subsection (d), where it clearly says in a capital letter, “a Federal law enforcement officer.”

So it is important to note that the existing Federal law does not cover State and local officers, which this bill would and, thereby, is one of the things that necessitates this action.

Also, I want to point out, respectfully, that that same criminal code—just one-page later in section 3593, also in title 18, subsection (f)—says: “Special Precaution to Ensure Against Discrimination.”

We know that Federal law already provides that a jury must specifically find that a defendant’s race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or that of the victim, is not a factor in their decision.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last November, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, Police Officer Scott Bashioum was shot and killed as he and his partner responded to a domestic disturbance call. They were ambushed as they approached the home. Officer Bashioum was also a United

States Air Force veteran. He retired as a senior master sergeant with 29 years of service.

He will be remembered for his service both in the Canonsburg community as a police officer, and to the country as a veteran.

Mr. Speaker, when our brothers and sisters are killed in the line of duty, we can memorialize them by building monuments. We can remember them by renaming buildings. We can support them by raising funds to help their widows and their orphaned children.

□ 1530

But most importantly, we can make sure we do all we can so that they return home at the end of their watch and that we protect their right to raise their children and their children's right to be raised by them. The community needs to know that we do all we can to make sure that thin blue line does not break and that thin blue line does not bend. We need to work together as a nation to protect those who protect the safety of all of us.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, every day, courageous men and women in America's law enforcement leave the safety of their homes to go into volatile situations, not knowing whether or not they will even return home safely. These brave police officers and first responders have dedicated their lives to ensuring our safety, as well as the safety of our neighborhoods and communities. I honor these fearless men and women and recognize the sacrifice they and their families make.

But merely saying thank you is not enough. The Thin Blue Line Act will protect law enforcement officials by giving harsher penalties to criminals targeting the police and first responders who put their lives on the line daily to protect and defend us.

It is my duty and privilege to support efforts that give our dedicated law enforcement officials the best possible chance of coming home safely every day. Mr. Speaker, this is how I can show my gratitude. Each House Member should join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 10 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Louisiana has 15½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I think it is clear that we are all in support of the protection of our officers. I think that there is no competition on sympathy or wanting to appropriately assure that those who go up against our officers in a vile and violent manner would be brought to justice.

I think the point on race disparity as relates to the death penalty is relevant. It is about life. But I want to make it very clear: Under this underlying bill, our officers who are State police officers are protected already, including the example that I used about the MIT officer in the Boston Marathon terrorist act. It is if you are in the furtherance of a Federal crime. The bill itself is all Federal. You have to be engaged in an act that is a Federal crime.

Clearly, if the terrorists on 9/11 had lived, the cases of the firefighters who lost their lives certainly would have been tried—those cases of the tragic, heinous deaths of firefighters who are our friends, and certainly are my friends—under the Federal death penalty law.

In the case of U.S. v. Kenneth Barrett, a State law enforcement officer was killed during a drug raid. That is one of the underlying offenses. The defendant was sentenced to death.

In the case of Lashaun Casey, an undercover police officer was killed in a carjacking related to a drug transaction. A capital jury decided to sentence the defendant to life without the possibility of parole, but it was a capital jury.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. And so I want to honor them, too, but I also want to show the disparities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the very valuable point that Chief Justice Roberts made in the particular case of *Buck v. Davis* and the statistical documentation of the disparities in the death penalty cases. We cannot ignore it.

Chief Justice Roberts stated before the Court, in reversing the lower court, "some toxins can be deadly in small doses," when the district court wanted to ignore or diminish the fact that race was involved in this case.

A psychologist had the audacity to say that being Black did increase the probability that you would commit an act of violence prospectively. How sad is that?

We are saddened by the death of our officers, but we are already protecting them and the first responders. Pursuant to a Federal criminal act, the prosecutor, at their discretion, can charge the defendant with a death penalty case.

I just hope my colleagues will recognize that we are not divided in our love, affection, and respect for the men and women that serve as first responders and law enforcement throughout this Nation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to speak on the floor today not only in support of H.R. 115, the Thin Blue Line Act, but also in honor of all of our brave men

and women who put their lives on the line every single day to keep our communities safe.

I am the son of a first responder myself. My father was critically injured and permanently disabled in the line of duty. I know these sacrifices very well.

This country owes our law enforcement officers an extraordinary debt of gratitude for the many services they provide. Our Nation simply would not be what it is today were it not for the sacrifices of all those who take the oath to protect and to serve us.

The Thin Blue Line Act is simple: It seeks to expand on certain penalties to also include the murder or targeting of a State or local law enforcement officer.

Virtually every American—anyone of good conscience—is shocked and disgusted by the recent trend of our local law enforcement heroes being targeted for violent acts.

I am sad to report that, in my home State of Louisiana, we have been named the most dangerous State in America for law enforcement officers. It is shocking. It is true. It saddens all of us. The Thin Blue Line Act is a commonsense response to this epidemic that we are seeing across the culture.

We thank and we stand with our first responders back home in Louisiana and all across our Nation. Those dedicated public servants never question and never hesitate in the face of danger. As many people have analogized this, we consider them our sheepdogs. They protect our communities from the wolves of our society who prey upon the innocent.

To honor those sacrifices, I am proud, today, to support this legislation on the House floor.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter addressed to Mr. GOODLATTE and myself, and I want to read the first paragraph of it.

"Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Conyers:

"We are current and former law enforcement leaders and officers from jurisdictions across the country. We ask you to oppose H.R. 115, the Thin Blue Line Act. We do so because we believe this bill will do little to protect the lives of police and first responders and will drive away resources proven to be effective at protecting law enforcement and preventing and solving crime."

APRIL 26, 2017.

Re Law Enforcement Opposition to H.R. 115.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN CONYERS, JR.,
Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE AND RANKING MEMBER CONYERS: We are current and former law enforcement leaders and officers from jurisdictions across the country. We ask you to oppose H.R. 115, the Thin Blue Line Act. We

do so because we believe this bill will do little to protect the lives of police and first responders and will drive away resources proven to be effective at protecting law enforcement and preventing and solving crime.

We are all too familiar with the risks that local, state, and federal law enforcement and first responders take each day to prevent, investigate, and prosecute crime. In fact, some of us have served alongside colleagues who were killed in the line of duty. We understand the impulse to threaten those who have murdered our fellow officers with the death penalty, and some of us have experienced that desire directly.

But we also know that the death penalty, as it currently operates, is poor public policy. It is ineffective, expensive, and can make irrevocable mistakes. It is also used disparately and often on vulnerable populations, which undermines our ability to create effective and trusted relationships with those in the community on whose support our success depends. That is why, while some of us may philosophically support the death penalty, we all oppose its expansion in practice—even under the auspices of supporting law enforcement.

Each of us understands that it takes many and varied resources to keep our communities safe. We need strong partnerships with local government and the communities we serve. We need well-functioning and modern systems to collect, store and process police activities, crime data, and evidence. We need equipment to protect and assist officers as they perform their duties. One tool virtually never seen on our list of needs is the death penalty.

In short, we believe H.R. 115 is an unnecessary expansion of an already flawed and ineffective policy. We encourage you to oppose this bill and instead support measures that promote the overall health, safety, and welfare of law enforcement and the communities we have been sworn to protect.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

James Abbott, Chief, West Orange (NJ) Police Department (1997–Present).

John Breckenridge, Officer, Manchester (NH) Police Department (ret.).

James Davidsaver, Emergency Management Director, Lancaster County, Nebraska; former captain, Lincoln (NE) Police Department.

Neill Franklin, Baltimore Police Department (2000–2010); Maryland State Police (1976–1990).

Gerald Galloway, Chief, Southern Pines (NC) Police Department (1988–2005); Past President, North Carolina Chiefs of Police Association; former Executive Committee member, IACP.

Terence Inch, Professor of Criminal Justice, York College of Pennsylvania; Former Commissioner of Police, Hellam Township (PA); Former Detective Chief Inspector, New Scotland Yard, London.

George Kain, Ph.D., Police commissioner, Ridgefield, CT; Division of Justice and Law Administration at Western Connecticut State University.

Douglas Orr, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor, Champlain College (2009–present); Adjunct Professor, Gonzaga University (2006–present); Detective, Spokane (WA) Police Department (1996–present); Corporal, Idaho State Police (1992–1996); Patrol Officer, Greenville (SC) Police Department (1987–1992).

Norman Stamper, Chief, Seattle Police Department (1994–2000); San Diego Police Department (1966–1994).

James Trainum, Detective, Washington Metropolitan Police Department (1983–2010).

David Walchak, Deputy Assistant Director (Ret.) FBI (2000–2004), Sr. Advisor FBI (1999–2000), Sr. Policy Advisor USDOJ COPS Office

(1997–1999), Chief of Police (Ret.) Concord, NH (1975–1997), President, International Association of Chiefs of Police (1995–1996).

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like all of my colleagues to recognize that, during our observation of National Police Week, we are reminded again of the importance of ensuring that law enforcement officers are safe so they can carry out their duties effectively.

These kinds of “enhancement” bills like H.R. 115 do nothing to invest in officer wellness or to address the everyday challenges faced by police officers or first responders. Moreover, they are redundant, especially because there are laws that protect police officers and first responders from violence in all 50 States.

Rather than advancing a bill that amounts to an empty gesture, that is damaging, at best, this Congress should focus on real reform measures that will protect law enforcement, first responders, and their communities. Providing duplicative protections to law enforcement simply cannot counterbalance the impact of fundamentally flawed death penalty legislation.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard many arguments from the other side of the aisle in opposition to this legislation. Of course, they began by saying how much they support the men and women of law enforcement. But let's consider these arguments and decide for ourselves in closing here.

First, we heard that the legislation is duplicative. It is not. In fact, it closes a loophole that currently exists in Federal law. There is currently no provision in our Federal law stating that the killing of a State or local law enforcement officer shall be an aggravating factor for capital punishment.

Next, we heard that this legislation is unnecessary. It is not, unless you believe that State and local law enforcement officers are not somehow entitled to the same legal protections currently enjoyed by Federal officers. That is what this legislation would correct.

A third argument we heard is that this is a messaging bill. It is clearly not that. Though it may be true that this provision would apply in a limited number of cases because the vast majority of capital cases are prosecuted at the State level, this bill inserts a provision in Federal law that will be vitally important in the cases where it would be applicable, such as in the Boston bombing.

On that point, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have noted that Federal law already contains provisions to ensure criminals who carry out heinous acts such as the Boston terrorism attacks are dealt with appropriately. That is, of course, true, but saying that ignores

the suffering of families of fallen police officers who have lost their lives rushing to aid after such an attack.

It also ignores the sacrifice of law enforcement officers themselves, for example. Officer Sean Collier of the MIT Police Department is one example. He was murdered by the Tsarnaev brothers during their flight following their horrific act.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, what these arguments reveal is simply that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle oppose this bill because it amends a Federal death penalty statute.

We would point out, in response to the letter that was just entered into the RECORD, that we have received support letters that are already in the RECORD from numerous law enforcement organizations, including the Fraternal Order of Police, the Major County Sheriffs of America, the National Association of Police Organizations, and the Sergeants Benevolent Association of the NYPD, among many, many others across the country who believe that this is an appropriate step for us to take today.

In light of all that, Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to reject the arguments of the other side, to support the men and women who comprise the thin blue line between order and chaos in our society, and to support this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 323, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. CONYERS. 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 question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1556

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HILL) at 3 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Passage of H.R. 115; and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1892.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

THIN BLUE LINE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 115) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide additional aggravating factors for the imposition of the death penalty based on the status of the victim, as amended, 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 passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 271, nays 143, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 265]

YEAS—271

Abraham	Cramer	Herrera Beutler
Aderholt	Crist	Hice, Jody B.
Aguilar	Cuellar	Higgins (LA)
Allen	Culberson	Higgins (NY)
Amodei	Davidson	Hill
Arrington	Davis, Rodney	Holding
Babin	Demings	Hollingsworth
Bacon	Denham	Hudson
Banks (IN)	Dent	Huizenga
Barletta	DeSantis	Hultgren
Barr	DesJarlais	Hunter
Barton	Deutch	Hurd
Bera	Diaz-Balart	Issa
Bergman	Donovan	Jenkins (KS)
Biggs	Duffy	Jenkins (WV)
Bilirakis	Duncan (SC)	Johnson (LA)
Bishop (GA)	Duncan (TN)	Johnson (OH)
Bishop (MI)	Dunn	Jones
Bishop (UT)	Emmer	Jordan
Black	Estes (KS)	Joyce (OH)
Blackburn	Farenthold	Katko
Blum	Faso	Kelly (MS)
Bost	Ferguson	Kelly (PA)
Brady (TX)	Fitzpatrick	Kilmer
Brat	Fleischmann	Kind
Bridenstine	Flores	King (IA)
Brooks (AL)	Fortenberry	King (NY)
Brooks (IN)	Fox	Kinzinger
Buchanan	Franks (AZ)	Knight
Buck	Frelinghuysen	Krishnamoorthi
Bucshon	Gaetz	Kustoff (TN)
Budd	Gallagher	Labrador
Burgess	Garamendi	LaHood
Bustos	Garrett	LaMalfa
Byrne	Gibbs	Lamborn
Calvert	Gonzalez (TX)	Lance
Carbajal	Goodlatte	Latta
Carter (GA)	Gosar	Lawson (FL)
Carter (TX)	Gottheimer	Lewis (MN)
Cartwright	Gowdy	Lipinski
Castor (FL)	Granger	LoBiondo
Chabot	Graves (GA)	Long
Cheney	Graves (LA)	Loudermilk
Coffman	Graves (MO)	Love
Collins (GA)	Green, Gene	Lucas
Collins (NY)	Griffith	Luetkemeyer
Comer	Grothman	Lynch
Comstock	Guthrie	MacArthur
Conaway	Harper	Maloney, Sean
Cook	Harris	Marchant
Correa	Hartzler	Marino
Costa	Heck	Marshall
Costello (PA)	Hensarling	Mast

McCarthy	Ratcliffe	Stefanik
McCaul	Reed	Stewart
McClintock	Reichert	Stivers
McHenry	Renacci	Taylor
McKinley	Rice (SC)	Tenney
McMorris	Roby	Thompson (CA)
Rodgers	Roe (TN)	Thompson (MS)
McSally	Rogers (AL)	Thompson (PA)
Meadows	Rogers (KY)	Thornberry
Meehan	Rohrabacher	Tiberi
Meng	Rokita	Tipton
Messer	Rooney, Francis	Torres
Moolenaar	Ros-Lehtinen	Trott
Mooney (WV)	Rosen	Turner
Mullin	Roskam	Upton
Murphy (FL)	Ross	Valadao
Murphy (PA)	Rothfus	Vela
Noem	Rouzer	Wagner
Norcross	Royce (CA)	Walberg
Nunes	Ruiz	Walden
O'Halloran	Ruppersberger	Walker
O'Rourke	Rutherford	Walorski
Olson	Sanford	Walters, Mimi
Palazzo	Scalise	Weber (TX)
Palmer	Schiff	Webster (FL)
Panetta	Schrader	Wenstrup
Pascarella	Schweikert	Westerman
Paulsen	Scott, Austin	Williams
Pearce	Sensenbrenner	Wilson (SC)
Perlmutter	Shimkus	Wittman
Perry	Shuster	Womack
Peters	Simpson	Woodall
Peterson	Sinema	Yoder
Pittenger	Smith (MO)	Yoho
Poe (TX)	Smith (NE)	Young (AK)
Poliquin	Smith (TX)	Young (IA)
Posey	Smucker	Zeldin
Quigley	Soto	

NAYS—143

Adams	Evans	Moore
Amash	Poster	Moulton
Barragán	Frankel (FL)	Nadler
Bass	Fudge	Neal
Beatty	Gabbard	Nolan
Beyer	Gallego	Pallone
Blumenauer	Green, Al	Payne
Blunt Rochester	Grijalva	Pelosi
Bonamici	Hanabusa	Pingree
Boyle, Brendan	Hastings	Pocan
F.	Himes	Polis
Brady (PA)	Hoyer	Price (NC)
Brown (MD)	Huffman	Raskin
Brownley (CA)	Jackson Lee	Rice (NY)
Butterfield	Jayapal	Richmond
Capuano	Jeffries	Roybal-Allard
Cárdenas	Johnson (GA)	Rush
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Ryan (OH)
Castro (TX)	Kaptur	Sánchez
Chu, Judy	Keating	Sarbanes
Ciulline	Kelly (IL)	Schakowsky
Clark (MA)	Kennedy	Schneider
Clarke (NY)	Khanna	Scott (VA)
Clay	Kihuen	Scott, David
Cleaver	Kildee	Serrano
Clyburn	Kuster (NH)	Sewell (AL)
Cohen	Langevin	Shea-Porter
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Sherman
Conyers	Larsen (CT)	Sires
Cooper	Lawrence	Slaughter
Courtney	Lee	Smith (NJ)
Crowley	Levin	Smith (WA)
Cummings	Lewis (GA)	Speier
Davis (CA)	Lieu, Ted	Takano
Davis, Danny	Loeb sack	Titus
DeFazio	Lofgren	Tonko
DeGette	Lowenthal	Tsongas
Delaney	Lowe	Vargas
DeLauro	Lujan Grisham,	Veasey
DelBene	M.	Velázquez
DeSaulnier	Luján, Ben Ray	Visclosky
Dingell	Maloney,	Walz
Doggett	Carolyn B.	Wasserman
Doyle, Michael	Massie	Schultz
F.	Matsui	Waters, Maxine
Ellison	McCollum	Watson Coleman
Engel	McGovern	Welch
Eshoo	McNerney	Yarmuth
Españolat	Meeks	
Esty (CT)	Mitchell	

NOT VOTING—16

Johnson, Sam	Russell
McEachin	Sessions
Napolitano	Suozi
Newhouse	Swalwell (CA)
Rooney, Thomas	Wilson (FL)
J.	

□ 1620

Ms. PINGREE and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. HIGGINS of New York, TIP-TON, and CARBAJAL changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So 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:

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall No. 265.

Stated against:

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 265.

HONORING HOMETOWN HEROES
ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1892) to amend title 4, United States Code, to provide for the flying of the flag at half-staff in the event of the death of a first responder in the line of duty, 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 Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 1, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 266]

YEAS—411

Abraham	Brown (MD)	Costa
Adams	Brownley (CA)	Costello (PA)
Aderholt	Buchanan	Courtney
Aguilar	Bucshon	Cramer
Allen	Budd	Crist
Amash	Burgess	Crowley
Amodei	Bustos	Cuellar
Arrington	Butterfield	Culberson
Babin	Byrne	Cummings
Bacon	Calvert	Davidson
Banks (IN)	Capuano	Davis (CA)
Barletta	Carbajal	Davis, Danny
Barr	Cárdenas	Davis, Rodney
Barragán	Carson (IN)	DeFazio
Barton	Carter (GA)	DeGette
Bass	Carter (TX)	Delaney
Beatty	Cartwright	DeLauro
Bera	Castor (FL)	DelBene
Bergman	Castro (TX)	Demings
Beyer	Chabot	Denham
Biggs	Cheney	Dent
Bilirakis	Chu, Judy	DeSantis
Bishop (GA)	Ciulline	DeSaulnier
Bishop (MI)	Clark (MA)	DesJarlais
Bishop (UT)	Clarke (NY)	Deutch
Black	Diaz-Balart	Dingell
Blackburn	Cleaver	Doggett
Blum	Clyburn	Donovan
Blumenauer	Coffman	Doyle, Michael
Blunt Rochester	Cohen	F.
Bonamici	Collins (GA)	Duffy
Bost	Collins (NY)	Duncan (SC)
Boyle, Brendan	Comer	Duncan (TN)
F.	Comstock	Dunn
Brady (PA)	Conaway	Ellison
Brady (TX)	Connolly	Emmer
Brat	Conyers	Engel
Bridenstine	Cook	Eshoo
Brooks (AL)	Cooper	Españolat
Brooks (IN)	Correa	

Estes (KS)
 Esty (CT)
 Evans
 Farenthold
 Faso
 Ferguson
 Fitzpatrick
 Fleischmann
 Flores
 Fortenberry
 Foster
 Foxx
 Frankel (FL)
 Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Fudge
 Gabbard
 Gaetz
 Gallagher
 Gallego
 Garamendi
 Garrett
 Gibbs
 Gonzalez (TX)
 Goodlatte
 Gosar
 Gottheimer
 Gowdy
 Granger
 Graves (GA)
 Graves (LA)
 Graves (MO)
 Green, Al
 Green, Gene
 Griffith
 Grothman
 Guthrie
 Hanabusa
 Harper
 Harris
 Hartzler
 Heck
 Hensarling
 Herrera Beutler
 Hice, Jody B.
 Higgins (LA)
 Higgins (NY)
 Hill
 Himes
 Holding
 Hollingsworth
 Hoyer
 Hudson
 Huffman
 Huizenga
 Hultgren
 Hunter
 Hurd
 Issa
 Jackson Lee
 Jayapal
 Jeffries
 Jenkins (KS)
 Jenkins (WV)
 Johnson (GA)
 Johnson (LA)
 Johnson (OH)
 Johnson, E. B.
 Jones
 Jordan
 Joyce (OH)
 Kaptur
 Katko
 Keating
 Kelly (IL)
 Kelly (MS)
 Kelly (PA)
 Kennedy
 Khanna
 Kihuen
 Kildee
 Kilmer
 Kind
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kinzinger
 Knight
 Krishnamoorthi
 Kuster (NH)
 Kustoff (TN)
 Labrador
 LaHood
 LaMalfa
 Lamborn
 Lance
 Langevin
 Larsen (WA)
 Larson (CT)
 Latta

Lawrence
 Lawson (FL)
 Lee
 Levin
 Lewis (GA)
 Lewis (MN)
 Lieu, Ted
 Lipinski
 LoBiondo
 Loeb sack
 Lofgren
 Long
 Loudermilk
 Love
 Lowenthal
 Lowey
 Lucas
 Luetkemeyer
 Lujan Grisham,
 M.
 Luján, Ben Ray
 Lynch
 MacArthur
 Maloney,
 Carolyn B.
 Maloney, Sean
 Marchant
 Marino
 Marshall
 Massie
 Mast
 Matsui
 McCarthy
 McCaul
 McClintock
 McCollum
 McGovern
 McHenry
 McKinley
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 McNerney
 McSally
 Meadows
 Meehan
 Meeks
 Meng
 Messer
 Mitchell
 Moolenaar
 Mooney (WV)
 Moore
 Moulton
 Mullin
 Murphy (FL)
 Murphy (PA)
 Nadler
 Neal
 Nolan
 Norcross
 Nunes
 O'Halleran
 O'Rourke
 Olson
 Palazzo
 Pallone
 Palmer
 Panetta
 Pascrell
 Paulsen
 Payne
 Pearce
 Pelosi
 Perlmutter
 Perry
 Peters
 Peterson
 Pingree
 Pittenger
 Pocan
 Poe (TX)
 Poliquin
 Polis
 Posey
 Price (NC)
 Quigley
 Raskin
 Ratcliffe
 Reed
 Reichert
 Renacci
 Rice (NY)
 Rice (SC)
 Richmond
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rohrabacher

Rokita
 Rooney, Francis
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Rosen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothfus
 Rouzer
 Roybal-Allard
 Royce (CA)
 Ruiz
 Ruppersberger
 Rush
 Rutherford
 Ryan (OH)
 Sánchez
 Sanford
 Sarbanes
 Scalise
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schneider
 Schrader
 Schweikert
 Scott (VA)
 Scott, Austin
 Scott, David
 Sensenbrenner
 Serrano
 Sewell (AL)
 Shea-Porter
 Sherman
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Sinema
 Sires
 Slaughter
 Smith (MO)
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Smith (WA)
 Smucker
 Soto
 Speier
 Stefanik
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Suozzi
 Takano
 Taylor
 Tenney
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Titus
 Tonko
 Torres
 Trott
 Tsongas
 Turner
 Upton
 Valadao
 Vargas
 Veasey
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walden
 Walorski
 Walters, Mimi
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters, Maxine
 Watson Coleman
 Weber (TX)
 Webster (FL)
 Welch
 Wenstrup
 Westerman
 Williams
 Wilson (FL)
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yarmuth
 Yoder
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IA)
 Zeldin

NAYS—1

Hastings

NOT VOTING—18

Buck
 Chaffetz
 Cole
 Crawford
 Curbelo (FL)
 Gohmert
 Grijalva

Gutiérrez
 Johnson, Sam
 McEachin
 Napolitano
 Newhouse
 Noem

Rooney, Thomas
 J.
 Russell
 Sessions
 Swalwell (CA)
 Walker

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1627

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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Vote No. 263, I would have voted "nay" on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 324, providing for consideration of H.R. 1039. On rollcall Vote No. 264, I would have voted "no" on agreeing to H. Res. 324, providing for consideration of H.R. 1039. On rollcall Vote No. 265, I would have voted "nay" on passage of H.R. 115, Thin Blue Line Act. On rollcall Vote No. 266, I would have voted "yea" on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1892, Honoring Hometown Heroes Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall vote Nos. 265 and 266. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 265, and "yea" on rollcall No. 266.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, circumstances have arisen which caused me to return home to Oklahoma early. However, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 263, "yea" on rollcall No. 264, "yea" on rollcall No. 265, and "yea" on rollcall No. 266.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes on account of family obligations in the district. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 265, and "yea" on rollcall No. 266.

□ 1630

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES REGARDING AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 953, REDUCING REGULATORY BURDENS ACT OF 2017; H.R. 1761, PROTECTING AGAINST CHILD EXPLOITATION ACT OF 2017; AND H.R. 1973, PROTECTING YOUNG VICTIMS FROM SEXUAL ABUSE ACT OF 2017

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules has issued announcements outlining the amendment process for three measures that will likely be before the Committee on Rules next week. The amendment deadline has been set for Monday, May 22 at 10 a.m. for H.R. 953, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2017; for Monday,

May 22 at 3 p.m. for H.R. 1761, the Protecting Against Child Exploitation Act of 2017; and Tuesday, May 23 at 10 a.m. for H.R. 1973, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse Act of 2017.

The text of these measures, Mr. Speaker, is available on the Committee on Rules website at this time, and Members can feel free to contact the Committee on Rules with any questions regarding the amendment process.

CITIZENSHIP FOR SURVIVORS OF FALLEN FIRST RESPONDERS

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

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 1970, the Kerrie Orozco Act. This coming Saturday is the 2-year anniversary of the death of the Omaha Police Officer Kerrie Orozco, who was killed while serving a warrant to a convicted felon and known gang member. May 20, 2015, will forever be a somber day in the Omaha metro area.

Every day all across the country, first responders put their lives on the line to protect citizens. When Officer Orozco was killed, her husband, Hector, was going through the process to gain U.S. citizenship, and her death put a halt to it. He has an enormous responsibility as a single parent, and we owe it to Kerrie to ensure that her family is provided the same protections they would have had if this unfortunate situation had not occurred.

H.R. 1970 would give many of our first responders peace of mind to know that, even in death, their surviving loved ones can continue the immigration process. This legislation would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow for the surviving family members of a fallen U.S. citizen first responder to be naturalized upon compliance with all requirements.

Current law allows for surviving family members of the U.S. military killed in service of our Nation to continue with their citizenship application. H.R. 1970 will simply extend that privilege to first responders. We owe it to Officer Orozco and other fallen first responders to honor their memory by passing H.R. 1970.

I look forward to working with both Democrats and Republicans in Congress to give our first responders the peace of mind they deserve as they head out the door each day to serve our communities.

STROKE AWARENESS MONTH

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of May as Stroke Awareness Month. As a stroke survivor, I understand the magnitude of this disease and the hundreds of thousands of lives it touches in American families each year.

We know that the risk of stroke increases each year, but strokes can and do occur at any age. In fact, every 40 seconds, someone in the United States suffers a stroke; and every 4 minutes, someone dies from a stroke. Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, killing nearly 130,000 Americans per year.

To help raise awareness on how stroke affects Americans across all ages, races, and demographics, today I am reintroducing my resolution recognizing May as Stroke Awareness Month. The resolution aims to enhance public awareness by urging and continuing the coordination and cooperation among researchers, families, and advocates for improving treatment for individuals who suffer stroke. Together, we can combat this illness and work together toward long-term solutions to prevent, treat, and improve the lives of those suffering from stroke.

I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TIBERI) for joining me as an original cosponsor of this bipartisan effort. Mr. Speaker, I ask others to please sign on.

WE NEED A BORDER WALL

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

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, last week I again visited the Arizona-Mexico border. I examined border fencing in the city of Nogales, on the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation, and a working cattle ranch. As an Arizona native, I have visited the border many times, and each time I am disheartened by what I see.

Much of the fencing I saw last week would do little to keep illegal aliens from crossing the border. In failing to construct a wall, we are allowing anyone to enter the United States.

Border Patrol agents are outnumbered by illegal aliens, drug cartel scouts, and human smugglers. The technology in place is woefully inadequate. There is no question that our citizens along the border are in danger and our national security is in peril due to the unknown identities of those crossing our border.

Mr. Speaker, President Trump won by promising to build a border wall. I unequivocally stand with him, but building the wall is only the first step to securing our border. We must also increase the number of Border Patrol agents, invest in cutting-edge technology, and fully enforce our immigration laws. These expenditures and efforts are necessary and worth the cost. It is time to do what we said we would do.

REMEMBERING AL KARNIG

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

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Al Karnig, a dedicated

and passionate member of the San Bernardino community who served as president for California State University, San Bernardino, for 15 years.

Dr. Karnig was a fierce advocate for our students, overseeing record numbers of enrollment, diversity, and faculty, as well as raising tens of millions of dollars for the university.

When Al wasn't working on improving access to higher education in our community, he was investing his personal time to make the inland empire a better place to live and raise a family. He served on the board for KVCR Educational Foundation, Inland Empire Economic Partnership, and the Community Hospital of San Bernardino.

Just last month, Al was in my office touting his latest philanthropic venture to help children, the Infant-Toddler Success program, working with parents and caregivers of children from birth to 36 months to help them to be ready for school and life.

I thank Dr. Karnig for his tireless efforts to make our region home to a world-class institution through Cal State, San Bernardino, as well as his advocacy on behalf of San Bernardino County families. As we mourn his loss, we give thanks for his contributions to our community, which will live on in his family, colleagues, graduates, students, children, and parents he helped through so many years of service.

HONORING FALLEN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

(Ms. MCSALLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Police Week and to applaud the 900,000 law enforcement officers nationwide.

Last year, Arizona lost some of our finest, those who paid the ultimate sacrifice to keep our communities safe: Officer David Glasser of Phoenix PD was killed in the line of duty last May, leaving behind his wife and two children; Senior Officer Leander Frank of Navajo Nation PD was killed while responding to a call last August, and he is survived by his wife and children; Officer Darrin Lee Reed of Show Low PD was shot in the line of duty this past November, just weeks away from his retirement, leaving behind his wife, his son, and his daughter. We can never fully express our gratitude or repay the debt for their service.

I would also like to honor those who serve in law enforcement along our border. While not every community in America has the proximity to the border that my district does, we all benefit from the courage of CBP officers and Border Patrol agents. Last August, we lost Border Patrol Agent Manuel Alvarez, who is survived by his wife and four children. Just over a week ago, we lost CBP Officer Edgard Garcia, who was well loved by our Tucson community.

We owe these men and their families for their ultimate sacrifice, and we owe a debt of gratitude to those who serve us today and every day in uniform.

WE NEED INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today about the need for investment in our infrastructure. As we know, this week is National Infrastructure Week. In my district on the central coast of California, we need infrastructure investment, not just for our roads, for our water systems, and our rural broadband but for something I used growing up, the transit systems.

The bus systems where I am from played an important role not just in my life but in many of my constituents' daily lives. Parents use the system to bring their children to their doctors, students use the transit system to attend the many schools and colleges in my area, and our employees use this form of transportation when they travel to their high-tech jobs in Silicon Valley, to their hospitality jobs on the Monterey Peninsula, and to their agriculture jobs in the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys.

The transit system makes our businesses more accessible to their employees, to their customers, and everybody who helps the regional economy, but the benefits don't end with our riders. With transit, our roads experience less wear and tear, and our environment is protected.

I know that my district isn't unique when it comes to the need for infrastructure investment. Our entire country needs it. So let's continue to do our jobs here in the Congress. Let's invest in our transit systems, in our infrastructure, so that our government can do something for our constituents, our local businesses, our home, and our families.

HONORING BUDDY LAROSA

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

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Buddy LaRosa for his countless years of service to the city of Cincinnati, having touched the lives of so many. Recently, West Elder Street near Findlay Market in Cincinnati was renamed Buddy LaRosa Way.

The exact spot was picked because, according to Buddy, that is the exact spot where he sold shopping bags for 3 cents when he was 10 years old. This was the beginning of his successful pizza empire, LaRosa's Pizza, a Cincinnati favorite. But great pizza isn't Buddy's only contribution to the Cincinnati area, not by a long shot.

Buddy is one of the most generous people I have had the pleasure of knowing through my life. He has dedicated

his time and energy, making many contributions supporting the people of our community and changing their lives. Naming Buddy LaRosa Way is a reminder of how the city of Cincinnati has been forever positively changed by Buddy LaRosa's heart and soul. Thank you, Buddy.

PLEASE READ THE NEW HEALTHCARE BILL

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged and honored to be a Member of this House, and it is very frustrating for us to come here week after week and to not do the business of the people of the United States of America. One of those impediments is that we have a President of the United States who is trying to force and push this Congress, and many others in his administration, to do things that are not right for the people and this country.

I think it is important for us to understand that when and if you get an opportunity to read the legislation called TrumpCare, you will realize that really what it is about is Trump doesn't care about your healthcare. Please, just read it. I apologize for talking about the 24 million-plus Americans who will lose their healthcare if this bill were to become law. I apologize because I need to remind each individual that they will likely lose the ability to see a doctor if this bill becomes law. Please, please, help us. Please, focus on what is going on here in Washington and what is not going on here in Washington for everyone's sake.

SYRIAN ATROCITIES

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

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, recent State Department revelations show that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad continues inflicting atrocities on his own people. The discovery of a crematorium at Saydnaya military prison will only make it more difficult to account for the thousands detained and executed by Assad.

According to numerous nongovernmental organizations, the Assad regime has abducted and detained between 65,000 and 117,000 people between 2011 and 2015. Credible reports have the regime executing up to 50 people daily. Assad uses the excuse of fighting terrorism to justify this gross campaign of inhumanity against innocent civilians. We know he has used mass graves and crematoriums to dispose of the corpses of the murdered. The savagery must stop.

I am proud to represent many Syrian Americans in Charleston, West Virginia. I urge my colleagues to join me

in publicly condemning the atrocities committed by the Syrian regime of President Assad. Syrians deserve to be safe and free.

□ 1645

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DR. ABRAHAM FISCHLER

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Dr. Abraham Fischler, president emeritus of Nova Southeastern University.

Dr. Fischler was one of south Florida's education pioneers and served as NSU's second president for 22 years, as well as a member of the Broward County School Board.

Dr. Fischler was an inspiration to all those who knew him, myself included. He served as NSU president when I was a member of the staff, often providing wise counsel and guidance.

He understood that in order to invest in our students, we need to invest in our teachers. He was truly an educator's educator. There are more than 10,000 students currently enrolled in the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education.

He has shaped countless lives and will always be remembered for his determination to ensure our students succeed. Thanks to Dr. Fischler, our young adults face their future prepared and ready to take on all that life has to offer.

My thoughts are not only with his wife, Shirley, and the entire Fischler family, but with the students, faculty, and staff.

HONORING WILLIAM T. COLEMAN, JR.

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of one of our Nation's greatest leaders and, for me, in my young career, a mentor and good friend, William Coleman, Jr., who passed away earlier this year at the age of 96.

Throughout his long career, Bill helped shape the future of our country in a past full of racial tension.

In 1948, Bill became the first African American to serve as a law clerk on the United States Supreme Court, and helped draft the legal brief for the landmark 1954 case, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Bill later became our Nation's second African-American Cabinet official, serving as Transportation Secretary for Gerald Ford.

I extend my respect, affection, and prayers to his family, his loved ones, his former law partners, and his staff.

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT WEEK

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week, it is a privilege to honor the men and women of law enforcement who put their lives on the line every single day to keep us safe.

In my hometown of Philadelphia and across the Nation, police officers serve our communities with immeasurable courage. Every police officer goes to work knowing that any day could be their last. In Philadelphia alone, more than 260 police officers throughout our city's history have lost their lives.

One thing in Congress that we could do to show just how much we honor their sacrifice is to enact the legislation that myself, along with Congressman FITZPATRICK, Senators CASEY and TOOMEY, have introduced. It would provide a boost of education aid, up to the maximum Pell grant award, for the children of fallen law enforcement and first responders who have died in the line of duty. The bipartisan Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act is widely supported by the law enforcement community.

Although we can never fully repay our debt to those families who have made the ultimate sacrifice, I believe this would be an important step in the right direction.

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT WEEK

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

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the great men and women of law enforcement. As you know, it is National Law Enforcement Week, first established by President Kennedy in 1962.

Imagine waking up every morning, rolling out of your bed, rubbing your eyes, getting dressed for work, kissing a loved one good-bye for what may be the very last time. You walk out your door not even thinking about the potential danger that awaits you, not even questioning who the person is asking for help, and not hesitating to step in the line of fire should you be required to.

Notice that I said "you." You, a Republican. You, a Democrat. Black, White, Brown, gay, or straight, for all types don the uniform every day.

Men and women of law enforcement are a special breed amongst us. Theirs is a higher calling for service. They are part of the very fabric of our society. Without them, we would not have order, and our laws would be worthless.

For those men and women of law enforcement in Virginia's Second District, and those around the Nation, we thank you. Your willingness to put the safety of others above your own demands respect, recognition, and, for some, remembrance.

TRUMP-RUSSIA TIES

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, on May 9, President Trump abruptly fired FBI Director Comey, who was leading the investigation into ties between his administration and Russia.

On May 10, the President met with the Russian Ambassador in the Oval Office, and the White House changed their reasoning for firing Comey.

On May 11, in an interview with Lester Holt, President Trump admitted that the Russia investigation was a factor in firing Comey.

On May 12, he appeared to threaten Comey, saying he had “better hope that there are no ‘tapes’” of their conversations.

On May 15, we learned Trump shared code word classified intelligence with the Russian Ambassador.

On May 16, Comey’s memo of his conversation with President Trump quoted him saying: “I hope you can see your way clear to letting this go.”

Every day brings a new scandal.

The appointment of Director Mueller as special prosecutor is a good first step, but it shouldn’t be our last. We need an independent commission, free of meddling from the Trump administration. Our democracy depends on it.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM “DOC” LONG

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor William “Doc” Long of Oak Ridge, North Carolina.

Doc is a veteran who served under the command of General Patton in World War II. For his service, the United States awarded him two Purple Hearts, two Bronze Stars, the Good Conduct Medal, the American Campaign Medal, and the Combat Infantry Badge.

Doc has worked tirelessly to help his fellow citizens understand the meaning of freedom and to ensure the sacrifices made on behalf of our Nation are not forgotten.

In 2014, the Carolina Field of Honor opened at Triad Park in Kernersville, North Carolina, to honor all who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. As one of its biggest supporters, Doc personally sponsored two of its military service monuments: the U.S. Army Monument and the U.S. Navy Monument.

On Saturday, May 27, family and friends will gather to celebrate this remarkable man’s 93rd birthday. North Carolina is fortunate to call Doc one of its own.

WHERE ARE THE WOMEN ON THE AHCA COMMITTEE?

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this is a picture of the committee our Republican colleagues in the Senate have put together and tasked with crafting a healthcare bill that will affect the healthcare of tens of millions of American women.

And just a quick glance at his poster tells you that there is not one person on this committee who will ever bear a child or need maternity care. There is no one on this committee that will ever need a mammogram. No one on this committee will ever have to worry about having their access to affordable contraceptives or prenatal care taken away from them.

Yet, the House bill that was delivered to the Senate callously would make healthcare services and insurance coverage either unaffordable or unavailable to millions of struggling hard-working women.

So, once again, we find that our Republican colleagues are making life-altering decisions without a single woman at the table, ignoring the very real, very cruel effects of the House-passed bill on American women and families.

So, once again, Mr. Speaker, we ask: Where are the women?

TAX REFORM FOR HARDWORKING MICHIGAN RESIDENTS

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

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, tax reform is a key concern for small-business owners and hardworking residents in my district.

My predecessor, former Ways and Means chairman, Dave Camp, worked diligently on this issue in hopes of reforming our Nation’s burdensome Tax Code.

Today, the Ways and Means Committee took up this work again because our Tax Code needs to be simpler, fairer, and flatter for Michigan families.

Tax reform done right will benefit Michigan residents of all income levels by making it easier for them to calculate and file their tax returns while lowering their tax burden.

The first bill I introduced as Michigan’s Fourth District Representative was legislation that would make it easier for Michigan families to pay for child care. It is my hope that this will become part of this tax reform package.

Our Tax Code was last updated in 1986. It is time for a change. I hope this Congress will pass tax reform for the 21st century.

HONORING PATRICIA BROUGHTON

(Ms. BARRAGÁN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patricia Broughton, my

caseworker in San Pedro, California, who is retiring after her distinguished career in public service.

Patricia has served for 32 years, and has served five Members of Congress, including me. She also served former Representatives Janice Hahn, Jane Harman, the late Steve Horn, the late Glenn Anderson, and then myself.

Patricia isn’t just a caseworker, she is a miracle worker. She has handled virtually every type of case that is referred to a congressional office.

Patricia has resolved Social Security and Medicare claims for seniors, helped disabled veterans who weren’t receiving their veterans’ disability checks, and assisted those who had trouble with the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the IRS.

Patricia has been an advocate for the frustrated, and a source of comfort for those tangled up in the Federal Government’s bureaucracy.

I wish Patricia the best in her well-deserved retirement from public service.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise during National Police Week to honor the men and women who every morning put on their badge and selflessly protect and serve our communities. Many heroically go above and beyond their duty.

It was a privilege of mine to invite and sit next to Kendall County Sheriff’s Deputy Tyler Johnson at last year’s State of the Union Address. On New Year’s night, he jumped into a freezing pond to rescue a motorist in a sinking car.

These acts of heroism deserve our recognition. Yet, rarely do our officers receive recognition and thanks for their day-to-day work serving people.

A police officer is the person that helps you when you are stranded on the side of the road. A police officer scours the neighborhood with your kids looking for a lost dog.

They are the Illinois police departments that tomorrow are taking part in Cops on a Rooftop with Dunkin’ Donuts to help raise money for the Illinois Special Olympics.

To police officers everywhere: Thank you.

COMMEMORATING THE DEDICATION OF THE WASHINGTON SPY TRAIL

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

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the dedication of the Washington Spy Ring along Route 25A of Long Island’s North Shore, in my and Congressman ZELDIN’s district.

This group of American heroes is often overlooked because knowledge

that George Washington's Culper Spy Ring existed was not disclosed until 1930.

Nathan Hale of the often noted "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country" is claimed by Huntington to have been captured there and gave rise to the spy ring.

One of Culper's top spies was Robert Townsend of Raynham Hall, Oyster Bay, also known as Culper, Jr.

Townsend posed as a Tory merchant in New York City. He relayed intelligence concerning troop movements, supplies, and British plots, using an expensive spy ring, coded messages, invisible ink, and elaborate signal system using everything from drying laundry to buttons on clothing.

Their efforts turned the tide of the war by assisting Washington to outfox the British, even saving him from capture.

As Washington said, and as is recounted to members of today's CIA:

"There is nothing more necessary than good intelligence to frustrate a designing enemy, and nothing requires greater pains to obtain."

I would like to thank the North Shore Promotional Alliance, Raynham Hall, the Ward Melville Heritage Organization, and the producers of the AMC television show "Turn" for promoting the legacy of these unsung American patriots.

□ 1700

GIVING CONSUMERS A FINANCIAL CHOICE

(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, in 2010, the Democratic majority passed the Dodd-Frank Act, a 2,300-page rewrite of America's financial laws. This sweeping law imposed significant costs on the economy, financial institutions, investors, small businesses, and American consumers.

Dodd-Frank was supposed to help lift up our economy; instead, what we got was the slowest, weakest recovery in 70 years. It was supposed to end taxpayer-funded bailouts; instead, it enshrined, permanently, Wall Street bailouts into law. It was supposed to make the financial system safer; instead, big banks got even bigger, and we have one less community bank or credit union every day. It was supposed to protect consumers; instead, higher bank fees, more expensive mortgages, fewer choices, and the most unaccountable government agency in the history of the Republic, the CFPB.

The Financial CHOICE Act moving through committee and to this floor soon will give consumers the protections they need and the opportunity for investment that has been so bottled up for many, many months—even years—in this country. The Financial CHOICE Act will be very helpful toward restart-

ing our economy and bringing back, once again, consumer choice.

Let's move this bill through.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BANKS of Indiana). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be here with my partner, Congresswoman JAYAPAL from the State of Washington, and we are running the Progressive Caucus Special Order hour.

We are delighted to kick off this session, which is about the extraordinary revelations this week and some breathtaking developments in Washington, with a statement by our distinguished colleague from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Maryland and the distinguished gentlewoman from Washington. Just by coincidence, Mr. Speaker, all three of us are members of the Judiciary Committee and had a very vigorous constitutional discussion this morning in a hearing on the responsibilities of the Judiciary Committee and, as well, the responsibilities of this Congress to the American people.

I think many of us offered our comments in the context that we did not speak as a Democrat or a Republican, though we are here on this floor as members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. We really spoke to our views and commitment as Americans.

Having served in this House for a period of time where I have seen the Judiciary Committee engage vigorously in impeachment proceedings for judges and Presidents, I know that the role of the Judiciary Committee is to be assured that the government—the executive, the legislature, the judiciary—works within the context of the Constitution.

So that is the spirit and the position in which I rise this evening: to share a few thoughts and to recount for our Members why this is a week that requires further oversight and insight and further assessment of whether the actions of the Oval Office, the executive—in this instance, the White House—have really complied with the Constitution of the United States.

I would, first of all, indicate that much of what I will say I will qualify and say that the President, or a President, or any President, would have the authority to do. So although, for example, the FBI Director is given a 10-year term, the individual serves at the will of the President of the United States of America. That means that President Trump, President Obama, President Bush, President Clinton, and others would have the authority to fire this

particular individual as they would have the right to fire Cabinet officers and others. They have the right to fire the Attorney General or the Deputy Attorney General, which may be one of the concerns we now have as we proceed to try to get to the facts of just a whole litany of issues.

Let me recount for you, as I discuss the firing of Director Comey, that in the last couple of days we have discerned that the Trump campaign operatives spoke to Russian operatives, Russian Government officials, 18 times in the last 7 months of the campaign.

We are well aware that the former NSA Director, something I think we, as Members of Congress—I will speak for myself—have never heard of in the tenure that I have been privileged to serve in the United States Congress, that an individual who was advising the President of the United States not in the form of a lobbyist, but in the form of an adviser in national security issues, was being paid by a foreign country.

So the advice that was given, two different recommendations: one, to drag out and throw to an unknowing future a Turkish citizen who is here, who has been involved in a number of schools and good charitable work, who lives in Pennsylvania; one of his recommendations was to throw this individual who is statused, not undocumented, out into the hands of the present President of Turkey, who has been known over the years, recently, to deny political and religious rights and human rights. That was one recommendation.

The second recommendation, whether you liked it or disliked it, was to not arm the Kurds to help with the fight in Syria. That advice was given, both of those proposals as advice were given while General Flynn was on the payroll of a foreign government.

So you would have to wonder in the series of incidents how we have come to the point where the FBI Director, who was actively engaged in investigating—or the FBI, investigating General Flynn, as were congressional committees—General Flynn is now under a subpoena by, I believe, the Senate Intelligence Committee. All of that, all of those elements certainly respond that the Congress and the FBI were engaged in active investigations. I think the American people understand that.

The American people understand that if their chief of police was engaged in an active investigation of murder, one that the whole community was just outraged about, as any murder, as all the homicides that take place in a community that you desire to be safe, and one local elected official indicated that you are investigating my neighbor or you are investigating me and had the authority to fire the chief of police with the reason of one thing and then it became very clear that you were firing the chief of police who was actively engaged in a murder investigation that was going to help the whole community find the truth and bring the perpetrator to justice, you fired that police

chief because it was either you that was being investigated, local elected official, or it was your neighbor that was being investigated, you just took it upon yourself to cease and desist of that investigation, and that is a simple explanation of what has happened here in Washington.

Because Washington is big, because this government is huge, because it is the leader of the free world, because all the nations look up to it gives it no greater authority to stop an active investigation that is based upon the duties of the FBI, but also the laws of this land, and that is just what happened. Director Comey was unceremoniously fired; a man who has had great tenure in law enforcement as an attorney and prosecutor and, now, over the FBI.

Of course, the so-called explanation—which, by the way, has just been repeated in the last 45 minutes on international television, saying the same thing, that his firing was based upon Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein's representation in a memorandum that many of us question that gave a whole explanation of the incidents regarding former Secretary Clinton, which, of course, she was not found to have warranted any further review or investigation or prosecution. But that was what was used by President Trump just in the last, as I said, 30 to 45 minutes, when we know that the Deputy Attorney General has already denied that he was the cause and center of the firing of FBI Director Comey, yet it is still being repeated over and over and over and over again.

You would also know that not only did he deny—and we look forward to hearing him tomorrow, the House Members, as the Senate has already heard him. What he also indicated, or what was also said to vindicate him, is that the President came out on last Thursday with interviews with Lester Holt on NBC News that it wasn't anybody but him, and it was connected to this fake Russian thing. I am paraphrasing. I may not have all of the words.

So you have an executive that, one could analyze in a number of court decisions, may have been credited with an abuse of power. There was no legitimate failing in the work of Director Comey on this Russian investigation.

Just 30 to 45 minutes ago, another comment that was made is that he was unpopular, and that he did very, very poorly in the hearings last week. None of those are elements of dismissal. Maybe reprimand, maybe study a little bit more before you go to Senatorial hearings or House hearings, but that has nothing to do with being fired.

I don't know whether any of us want, every single day, as we make very tough decisions in this House, that we are assessed on whether or not we are very popular. What we want to do is do what is right for the American people. And whatever you might say, I assume Director Comey felt that he was doing what is right for the American people.

Many disagreed with his handling and assessment of the issues dealing with former Secretary Clinton, particularly in the October surprise. That is legitimate. But it is not legitimate to say, way past that incident and when this individual is actively engaged—and there is no question or no guarantee that, in spite of our displeasure as Democrats, if the Office of the Presidency had gone the other way that Director Comey would be fired. There was no suggestion of that, none whatsoever, even with disagreeing with actions.

But here we have not only the misrepresentation of the reason, but the declaration that the reason was because of this Russian thing.

Let me share with you the comments of Professor Tribe in a Washington Post article on May 13, 2017, as he recounts the whole issue of this action bearing upon the actions that are in the Constitution, such as impeachment, that relate to the questions of whether or not the Presidency or the President has acted appropriately:

"The question of Russian interference in the Presidential election and possible collusion with the Trump campaign go to the heart of our system and ability to conduct free and fair elections."

Therefore, it was free. It was what we do.

"Consider, too, how Trump embroiled Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, despite Sessions' recusal from involvement in the Russia investigation, in preparing admittedly phony justifications for the firing on which Trump had already decided. Consider how Trump used the Vice President and White House staff to propagate a set of blatant untruths—before giving an interview to NBC's Lester Holt that exposed his true motivation.

"Trump accompanied that confession with self-serving—and manifestly false—assertions about having been assured by Comey that Trump himself was not under investigation. By Trump's own account, he asked Comey about his investigative status even as he was conducting the equivalent of a job interview in which Comey sought to retain his position as a Director."

So I believe that what we have here is a reasonable basis, those of us who have come to the floor tonight, to raise these questions and to be able to make sure that we do have a system of laws and that we do adhere to the rule of law.

□ 1715

We know that, subsequently, the Deputy Attorney General has appointed a special counsel under the provisions of the Attorney General. Of course, that individual could be fired. The regulation could be dismantled. But we hope that former Director Mueller of the FBI, who has impeccable credentials, will go forward and ensure that the American people know the truth.

That will be one part of it. I repeat, that will be one part of it. But, as I look at my closing remarks here, I want to ensure that we know that this is not something that is made up; that it continues to shock us, and it shocks the American people. It is not a made-up entity. It just continues with a long list of incidents, starting from the firing and then going up.

A comment Bill Moyers said: "The ensuing White House cover-up tries to pin the blame on a newly confirmed Deputy Attorney General whose hastily prepared memo criticizes Comey's 2016 statements. . . ."

But the late summer of 2015, a member of Trump's campaign staff called Lieutenant General Mike Flynn to ask if he is willing to meet with Trump. Trump agrees. Later Flynn says, four other Presidential candidates also reached out to him. There is a long list of items that may be true, may not be true, but clearly set a pattern, a pattern of the achilles heels of this Oval Office.

And so I would say to my colleagues that we should not turn a blind eye on this. I believe it is important to follow the facts. I have no quarrel with that. But neither am I afraid to use the term appropriately, an impeachment inquiry, but at least to find the facts of whether or not any of the actions that swirled around Director Comey, that swirled around General Flynn's and Director Comey's or the FBI's investigation of this particular series of incidents are in keeping with the responsibilities of the Congress, the Judiciary, in any elements there, or the Oval Office, the Presidency of the United States of America.

I think that the special prosecutor, for Americans to understand, deals specifically with pursuing or possible criminal acts. On the other hand, it is well known that the Congress can address how we fix this; how we make sure it doesn't happen again; how we work on behalf of the American people.

And so I hope that, as we conclude this Special Order, no one will point to any of the Members on this floor as taking this up as a personal cause against the President of the United States, or any President, and that we will respect the office, as we have always done. But it is our duty to shed light on these issues and shed light on these potential failures. It is our responsibility to take up the cause of curing, responding, fixing, and serving the American people.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congresswoman for those extremely thoughtful and lucid remarks. I also wish to associate myself with the idea that, here on this issue, we cannot act purely as partisans. I suppose I can make a partisan speech with the best of them, but we are called upon during these very trying days to speak not as partisans but as patriots and as constitutional patriots.

I have been a professor of constitutional law for 27 years at American

University's Washington College of Law, and I am aware that the Founders of this country were determined to see that while we acted as partisans in the normal push and pull of legislative politics, when it comes to the basic character of our democracy, all of us try to need to act in a way that is consistent with the constitutional values that unify us.

Thomas Jefferson said: "If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all."

And George Washington said that we should never forget that the word "party" comes from the French word "partie." One part, each party is one part of the whole, and we have to try to keep our mind focused on the whole thing.

Well, the whole country is in danger right now. The events of the last week have been breathtaking and extraordinary. So let's take a moment to try to catch our breath to remember what is really at stake with the Russian connection, with the firing of National Security Advisor Michael Flynn after 24 days, with the firing of FBI Director James Comey this week after he refused to drop the investigation into Michael Flynn, and the Russian connection.

All of this is about, in the big picture, an organized and systematic assault on the American form of government and our Democratic political institutions.

During the 2016 Presidential election, 17 of our U.S. intelligence agencies, including the FBI, the CIA, the National Security Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and more than a dozen of others, got together and produced a report where they said, with a very high degree of certainty, that Vladimir Putin and Russian agents had an organized campaign orchestrated to engage in cyber espionage of the United States of America and our political institutions, and cyber sabotage of our political institutions with paid operatives working to disseminate fake news and propaganda, and to engineer leaks of mixtures of real emails mixed in with fake news, and so on.

All of it meant to throw the Presidential election, to destroy the chances of Hillary Clinton, and to destabilize American political democracy. We know that this modus operandi was used before the 2016 election in America, and it was used again after, as recently as the election in the Netherlands with Mr. Wilders, who was the favorite of Vladimir Putin, and then again in France with Marine Le Pen and the National Front where Mr. Putin and his operatives did a data dump the weekend before the French Presidential election.

Right before the blackout on campaigning, they again orchestrated hacks of the Macron campaign, and then tried to put out, again, a complete disinformation package on behalf of Le Pen.

Well, the intelligence agencies warned us that this was just a dress re-

hearsal for 2020. This is what Vladimir Putin is doing. He is trying to organize every dictator, despot, and kleptocrat on Earth together to destroy the liberal democracies, from the outside and from the inside.

Now, militarily, he is no match for the United States of America. Economically, he is no match for the United States of America. Intellectually, in terms of our political institutions and the democracy we have built, our Constitution, he is no match for America.

But he perceives a weakness, and the weakness is all about the internet because the internet links the whole world together. And if he can use the internet in order to hack into our institutions, both our party institutions and our election systems, and the media, and political campaigns, and then use that to sew confusion and propaganda, then he may, indeed, be able to gain control over the direction of our country, the sovereign people of America.

We were warned in that intelligence agency report, which is public, which everybody can find online, that this is their plan. It wasn't as if 2016 was a one-shot deal. This is exactly what Putin will continue to do.

So that is the background. Now, why is the firing of FBI Director James Comey so disturbing? He, of course, had a 10-year term, which was abruptly and suddenly cut off by President Trump after Comey told him—according to Comey's account, at least—that he would refuse to drop the investigation into Michael Flynn.

There are lots of people involved in this Russian connection story, including Page, and Stone, and Manafort, and Jared Kushner that go way beyond what we can talk about here tonight. But I just want to focus for the moment on Flynn.

Why is this sequence of events so disturbing? Well, it came out this week also that the Trump transition team, headed by none other than Vice President PENCE, knew that Flynn was under criminal investigation at the time that they decided to hire him as America's National Security Advisor. At a point when they decided to make him America's number one national security operative, they knew he was under criminal investigation for being a paid operative of the Turkish Government, a paid agent of the Turkish Government. And nonetheless, they brought him on.

And then when it was learned from the Acting Attorney General Sally Yates that Mr. Flynn was vulnerable to blackmail by Russians for having misled Vice President PENCE about his entanglement with the Russian Ambassador and his conversations with the Russian Ambassador, still they kept him on. So they brought him on, knowing he was under investigation, then they knew he lied about his connections to the Russians, and still they kept him on.

When the media finally broke the story of Flynn's collusive actions with foreign governments while he was the National Security Agency Director, Trump finally fired him, grudgingly, let him go, but said that Flynn was the victim somehow, and even tried to disassociate himself from the firing of Flynn.

Then we learn that the President tried to get the FBI Director James Comey to drop the investigation. Now, that is according to the FBI Director James Comey, who has never been accused of lying or perjury. So it is going to be his word against that of the President of the United States, who has said things like: Well, TED CRUZ' father participated in the assassination of JFK; and 5 million people voted illegally in the United States, with no evidence at all; and Barack Obama was born in Kenya, or Indonesia; and he had his phones tapped, and so on.

And so that issue might come down to a swearing contest between the former Director of the FBI, Mr. Comey, and President Trump. But in any event, according to Comey, Trump said to him: Will you let it go? Will you let the investigation of Flynn go? And Comey said he would not. And then Comey was let go instead.

So the question is: What does Michael Flynn know that everybody bends over backwards in the Trump administration to try to please him and placate him?

This is an administration that doesn't mind insulting our longest and most cherished allies in the world: NATO, which he has said is obsolete; Mexico, which he has had no problem insulting and affronting; Australia; and so on. Yet with Michael Flynn, everybody is tiptoeing. Everybody is doing a tap dance. What does Michael Flynn know about President Trump? It would seem as if he has got some kind of information about the President that the President doesn't want to get out there.

That is why a special counsel had to be appointed, and I am glad a special counsel was appointed. And I believe that Mr. Mueller is up to the task. And he has been known as a straight shooter, and a nonpartisan, someone who will follow the facts where they will go.

Well, in the meantime, we have got to look at the much broader issue. Because, of course, that is about the criminal deeds or actions of particular people. And some people may end up facing prosecution for what they did. But there is a much larger issue here. Because as a country, we have got to stand up for strong democracy all over the world.

But what is happening with all of these shenanigans, and sinister contacts and connections with the Turkish Government, and the Russian Government, and Orban in Hungary, and the killer dictator Duterte in the Philippines who orders that people he thinks are drug users should be shot on

sight in his country, who has been invited to the White House by President Trump?

Well, our country has got to stand up for what is great about our country: our Constitution and our Bill of Rights. President Trump said this is a witch hunt. But I want to close by telling you about a real witch hunt that is going on right now on the planet Earth.

And if we were not so distracted by the spreading staph infection in the White House, we would be able to help in terms of this situation. And I refer to you an article that was in the newspaper a couple of days ago in *The New York Times* about the governor of Jakarta, one of the largest cities in Indonesia.

□ 1730

He is Christian. He is the Governor of Jakarta. Someone was running against him and said that all the Muslims should vote against him because he is Christian. They should have to vote for a Muslim because the Koran tells them to. The governor objected.

Mr. Basuki said: That is not right. The Koran doesn't say that Muslims must vote for Muslims. Muslims can vote for me, even though I am a Christian.

He was prosecuted, arrested for blasphemy against the Koran, against Islam, and sentenced to 2 years hard time in a maximum security prison in Indonesia.

In America, where we have a First Amendment and freedom of conscience, free exercise of religion, separation of church and State, we got rid of blasphemy a long time ago. But now we have got a human being—a governor, no less—who is in prison for hard time in Indonesia, one of our allies. We should not let that stand.

There are hundreds of people all over the Earth who are in prison for blasphemy or apostasy or heresy—religious offenses—and we are saying nothing about it. In Russia itself, there were just marches a month ago against political corruption and authoritarianism. Tens of thousands of people. Our government did nothing. Why? Some of them are on the payroll of Russian autocrats, and others just don't care.

We should be on the side of the people of Russia who are fighting for democracy, fighting for religious freedom, fighting for human rights. That is what America should be about. That is what is really at stake here.

Our government should not be consumed with self-interest and promoting people's corporate agendas. It should not be consumed with the personal vanity of the President. It should not be about private agendas. It should be about the public good of the American people and standing with democracies all over the Earth.

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

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: DIRECTOR COMEY FIRING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE). She has been such a champion on progressive issues for so long. BARBARA LEE still speaks for me across the country.

Ms. LEE. Let me thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL for yielding and for holding this important issue on this existential threat to our democracy. Also, I just have to say that she has just hit the ground running here on behalf of the American people, on behalf of working men and women, on behalf of peace and security in the world, on behalf of our democracy. So I thank her for her leadership.

The constant stream of allegations and scandals springing from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue is really quite shocking. I have to admit that, after watching President Trump fire the FBI Director who was investigating him, I thought things could not get any worse. But just days later, President Trump blundered into sharing classified intelligence with Russian officials.

As the Nation and the world grappled with the aftermath of this revelation, yet more shocking news was breaking. The *New York Times* has alleged that, before he was fired, Director Comey was pressured by President Trump to shut down an ongoing investigation into General Michael Flynn's possible collusion with the Russians.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear with the American people. If *The New York Times* report is true, President Trump's attempts to influence a Federal probe can only be described in one way, and that is obstruction of justice. And, yes, we all know obstruction of justice is an impeachable offense.

Right now, one thing, though, is crystal clear: The President's abuse of power has plunged this Nation into a full-blown constitutional crisis. This crisis goes far beyond party interests. Every American, Democrat or Republican, should be concerned by these allegations.

President Trump's actions have threatened national security, the rule of law, and the independence of our Nation's justice system. His actions dishonor the Office of the Presidency and place this Nation and our allies in danger.

The reports of last week underscore the need to establish a bipartisan, independent commission to get to the bottom of Russian interference in our elections once and for all. It is vitally important that Director Mueller—and I am very pleased that the Department of Justice appointed him; this is one step in the right direction—be given the resources and the autonomy to conduct an investigation.

Unfortunately, President Trump said that this investigation is a witch hunt. Nothing could be further from the truth. The American people deserve to know the facts about possible collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign. Our democracy must be defended at all costs.

I thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL for giving us a chance to speak tonight about this very dangerous moment that we are in, about Presidential abuse, and, really, about the preservation of our democracy. The Congressional Progressive Caucus continues to lead on so many issues that are important to this country and to the world.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), who has also been a leader in the Progressive Caucus on so many issues, from the death penalty to immigration to healthcare.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL and the Congressional Progressive Caucus for convening this 1-hour discussion about our democracy at risk.

I don't think it is really an exaggeration that what we are seeing right now is our democracy actually under attack. Unfortunately, it is from our own White House.

I think Americans around the country, regardless of their political party or even political persuasion, are kind of shaking their head and saying: What the heck is going on?

Every day, there is some sort of a new and disturbing revelation. We found out that the President of the United States just seems to have blurted out highly, highly classified information in a meeting with the Russian Ambassador and the Russian Foreign Minister—information that was passed on, it seems, from the Israelis, but actually could put some of the people who are doing the most delicate work on the ground in some danger. And then, of course, last week, the President fired the FBI Director, James Comey.

As a Democrat, I certainly have had problems in the past with James Comey. I think that he helped influence the outcome of the election. But it turns out that on national television the President basically admitted, after giving various explanations of the firing, that it came down to the Russian investigation.

Then we find out that James Comey actually took notes of a meeting with the President where the President asked him to drop the investigation of General Flynn and his connection to the Russians. It is a real question of what is going on.

It was an important step when, yesterday, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein took the important first step of appointing a special counsel to investigate the Russia connection and the relationship between this administration of President Trump and the Russians.

I am really happy. I was on the Intelligence Committee when Robert Mueller was the FBI Director. I have to tell you that I feel very confident in his independence and his integrity. I know that he, importantly, would not allow the FBI to work with the CIA when they wanted to torture people, essentially, by using enhanced interrogation techniques. So I feel good that he is a very good choice.

But having done that, today I was happy to sign a discharge petition to create an independent commission that would also be looking into even the larger picture about what was going on with the Russian influence campaign involving itself in our elections, and then also, what was the connection between the Trump administration, Donald Trump himself, did they collude on influencing the election?

It is important to do both. They are complementary. They don't do the same thing.

I am going to quote from ADAM SCHIFF, who is our ranking Democrat on the Intelligence Committee. I think he put it really well: "The value an independent commission adds is you have a body that is truly independent of any political consideration and also has all the resources it needs and a single focus on the oversight of what Russia did, how we need to respond in the future, and it brings that political independence and staff and resources on task. So those are two different needs, and I think they're complementary, not in competition with each other."

The other reason I am very much in support not only of the special prosecutor, but of the independent commission is because, then, Congress has a role here. Congress itself is saying—hopefully, Republicans and Democrats. We have two Republicans right now on our discharge petition that would force the bill to come to the floor that would say that we, together, think that this is worthy, our democracy is worthy of this kind of in-depth investigation.

Finally, let me say we would find out a lot about the relationship of the President and Russia, plus other conflicts of interest, if we could see his tax returns, like every other President has done. Release his tax returns.

Again, I would hope that this has not devolved into strictly a partisan issue. All Americans should say: Let us look at those ties the President may have in countries around the world or with companies at home.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Again, I am very pleased as the Congressional Progressive Caucus to be able host a Special Order every week. We pick a different topic every week, for those of you that are just beginning to listen. This week we want to focus attention on what we believe are some of the most serious and pressing issues facing our country today around the Trump administration's ties to Russia, around the firing of James Comey, and the many, many issues that have come forward over the

last several months, but certainly in the last week.

Since last Tuesday, we have borne witness to a slew of alarming events within the White House and the Department of Justice. Last Tuesday afternoon, we received word that the President had fired FBI Director James Comey from his position.

That position, by the way, is a 10-year term. Congress designated it as a 10-year term specifically to ensure that we could protect any administration and the entire country against any conflict of interest that may come up. Obviously, that did not convince the President that he should keep Director Comey.

So we heard that he fired him. It seems as if each morning we wake up to a barrage of firings, tweets, or untruths that continue to erode the public's confidence in our democracy.

So what do we know today? Certainly, we don't know enough, but we do know that the President fired Director Comey under the guise of being unsatisfied with how he handled Secretary Hillary Clinton's email investigation.

□ 1745

But if that were the case, then why didn't he fire him months ago? Why now? Why did he choose to meet with Russian officials the day after firing Mr. Comey?

Mr. Trump's attempts to use Clinton's emails to divert attention from Comey's investigation into the campaign's ties to Russia are, unfortunately, very disingenuous, and I think that they are proving to be unsuccessful.

Despite his claims that Mr. Comey was not investigating him, the President must have been concerned about what Director Comey would find because the firing, interestingly, came just days after Director Comey had requested additional resources for the investigation.

White House officials attempted at first to say that the blame for the firing was Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein's fault. They said it was at his recommendation. Attorney General Jeff Sessions weighed in on that decision as well. But, in fact, shortly after, the President went on television and said that, no, this was his decision regardless of what had been proposed, this is where he was going to be.

On Wednesday, just 1 day after firing then-Director Comey, the President welcomed the Russian foreign minister, Sergey Lavrov; and the Russian Ambassador, Sergey Kislyak, into the Oval Office for a closed press meeting. Let's not forget that Kislyak met with former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn during the campaign, a meeting that Flynn then lied about. I think this is very important because there were a number of Trump administration or Trump campaign officials that met with Russian officials over the course of many months before the election.

Those meetings in and of themselves are not a problem. The problem, however, is that these individuals continued to lie about those meetings, and that makes you wonder: What fire is there where the smoke is? Why would they lie about these things?

We certainly don't know that. We have been unable to get the transcripts of that conversation because the President has not been willing to release them.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is more willing to make that information public than our own President, but I find it outrageous that President Putin would actually propose to be sort of the backup of this information for the President. We are not looking to President Putin to provide corroboration of these meetings. We actually need an independent ability to look at the facts of this case.

On Monday, the news exploded with reports that the President released highly classified information to Lavrov and Kislyak during their discussion at the White House. This is extremely alarming. It is true that the President has the right to declassify any information, but the information that was shared was so sensitive that the United States had not even shared it with our allies. The President's decision to divulge that information to foreign officials—particularly Russian officials with whom our relationship is contentious at best—is dangerous and reckless.

There is no doubt in my mind that this will hinder our ability to build international coalitions to actually be able to share information with allies who provide that classified information to us with the understanding that we are going to protect that and guard that. Should any classified information then be declassified for some reason, it is done in consultation with the country that provided that information and with national security advisors. None of that happened in this situation.

President Trump also tweeted during the campaign that Hillary Clinton and her team were extremely careless in their handling of very sensitive and highly classified information. So this seems like a particular irony. The President claimed that Hillary Clinton's lack of ability to handle classified information actually made her unfit to be President.

Speaker PAUL RYAN said this: "It is simple: Individuals who are 'extremely careless' with classified information should be denied further access to it." Reince Priebus, Trump's Chief of Staff, took it one step further, saying: "Those who mishandled classified info have had their sec clearances revoked, lost their jobs, faced fines, and even been sent to prison."

So this is a situation that we have to take extremely seriously.

Before we could even fully engage and vet that news, however, reports then came out that President Trump had actually asked FBI Director James

Comey to drop the investigation into Michael Flynn. According to sources close to Comey, this request came just 1 day after Michael Flynn was fired. This is truly a new low. If this is true—and we are trying to get to the bottom of this—it would absolutely constitute an obstruction of justice. The President has put obstacle after obstacle in the way of any real investigation that gives us the information that we need to protect our national security and the American people.

In the 118 days since the Trump Presidency began, it has been scandal after scandal. The latest events have escalated this crisis to an even higher level. As I mentioned, the FBI Director serves a 10-year term specifically in order to be able to carry out these independent investigations free of partisanship or political pressure. The firing of James Comey and the fact that he was asked by the President for loyalty—again, this is apparently in Director Comey's memo, which we hope to be able to see—and to abandon the investigation against Michael Flynn are extremely serious offenses. They hurt our democracy and they hurt our country.

The President has tried to distract us time and time again, but we actually know that the American people deserve better. History smiles kindly on those who stand up and put country over party and on those who ensure that in the darkest of times and the most difficult of times, the times when we face a constitutional crisis, where our Nation wonders what direction we are going in, the times when we know that the need to preserve the institutions of democracy and justice are most necessary, those are the times when we need people to speak out on both sides of the aisle for the facts, for the truth, and for democracy.

This should not be a partisan issue. We are seeing that starting to emerge from our colleagues across the aisle. I commend those Republicans who have begun to ask for information, documents, and hearings; and I hope that more of my colleagues will join us in the pursuit of truth and in the pursuit of justice.

Last night we received news that Robert Mueller, who is the former FBI Director, has been appointed as special counsel for the investigation into the Trump campaign's ties with Russia. This is an extremely distinguished man. He has served the country with tremendous success and loyalty, and we are hopeful that Mr. Mueller will diligently investigate the allegations against Michael Flynn and other members of the Trump campaign with veracity and free from political influence. However, we still maintain that an independent commission is necessary because a special counsel answers to the Attorney General, who can then overrule decisions that they make or even fire them at any time. So the appointment of Robert Mueller is a good first step, but it cannot be the last.

Director Mueller will still be in the chain of command under the Trump-appointed leadership of the Justice Department. He cannot take the place of a truly independent outside commission that is free from Trump's meddling.

I think that is why it is so important that we all join in signing the discharge petition that was introduced yesterday by my colleagues, Representative SWALWELL and Representative CUMMINGS, who is the ranking member on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. This discharge petition would essentially allow for a bill to move forward that would establish an independent commission that we could truly trust to seek justice. The commission would interview witnesses, would obtain documents, would issue subpoenas, and would receive public testimony in order to examine whether or not the Russian Government did, in fact, interfere with U.S. elections and how they carried that out.

This is a really crucial step to take because it is not only about the short term and the immediacy of what is in front of us—extremely important, the commission would deal with that as well—but it is also about how do we ensure that these things don't happen again? What did happen, first of all, and how do we make sure that we continue to protect our democracy in the face of what 17 independent intelligence agencies said, which is that the Russians hacked our election in the United States?

There is a lot we need to understand. We need the special counsel, but we also need this independent citizen commission not made up of Members of Congress, but appointed by the House and the Senate leaders of both parties in equal numbers so that we could actually have people who look at this from the perspective of all of America and not tainted by even the vestiges or the appearance of party.

Apparently when President Trump heard that special counsel had been named, he laughed out loud, saying that this is "the greatest witch hunt of a politician in American history."

No, Mr. President, we are seeking the truth. As the American people have shown us, they are not backing down, and we will continue to fight for this truth.

Now, in that vein, I also wanted to mention that my colleague, Representative RASKIN, and I actually introduced a package of bills that we are calling the Trump transparency package. It is because we really believe that the American people deserve better. We believe that the American people deserve from us transparency. So what this package will do is, first, it will clearly forbid government officials from accepting anything of value from foreign governments in exchange for an official act. It would prohibit government employees from using their positions to further the financial interests of the President. It would ensure that the

President's press pool continues to exist so that the American people receive honest answers, and it would require the President and his family to publicly report any foreign business deals that exceed \$10,000.

These are simple steps. They are not egregious and they are not outrageous. They would apply to anyone. They are not partisan. They are about transparency and accountability so that we know that the President of the United States and that others in government are actually accountable to the American people—not to their financial interests, not to their bank accounts, not to their stock portfolios, not to their hotels and golf courses, but to the American people. We have to hold every administration—and certainly this one—accountable. So now, more than ever, it is our moral duty to defend the Constitution, and this bill package goes a step in the right direction.

So I hope that all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle would actually cosponsor the Trump transparency package with us so that we can continue to fight for the American people, for democracy, and for the notion that America is willing to question itself and for the notion that America is willing to always put our hands on that moral arc of the universe to push it more quickly towards justice.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CHENEY). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President and are further reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, first, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleagues, to talk about restoring Congress' constitutional oversight on matters of war and peace. I invite all of my colleagues to join me in demanding that this House immediately repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force.

Nearly 16 years ago, Congress passed an open-ended, blank check for endless war. This authorization gives any President the authority to wage limitless war at any time, anywhere, for any reason in perpetuity. The vote to relinquish our constitutional authority occurred just 3 days after the horrific terrorist attacks on 9/11. The American

people were angry and anxious to take action.

Madam Speaker, I was just as outraged and devastated as every other American, but I voted against this 2001 AUMF because I believed then—as I believe now—that it was a blank check and set the stage for perpetual war.

This House rushed to pass the 60-word authorization with little debate. Sixty words, Madam Speaker, drastically altered history. In the almost 16 years since its passage, the 2001 AUMF—which was designed, mind you, to punish the perpetrators of the brutal and deadly attacks on September 11—has been used now by three Presidents to wage endless war around the globe. A recent report from the Congressional Research Service shows that this authorization has been used more than 37 times in 14 countries to justify military action.

□ 1800

These include operations at Guantánamo Bay, warrantless wiretapping, and recent military actions in Libya, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, and many more. This report only looks at unclassified military actions.

I would like to now yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN), who has been such a leader on so many issues, especially around issues of our constitutional responsibility, issues around war and peace.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the Congresswoman for having this Special Order to address this issue and for continuing to be such a leader on behalf of this great democracy that we have.

Although I was not in Congress when this AUMF was established, more than 15 years later, it is clear this authorization is not designed for this endless and perpetual war on terror.

I commend the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for her bravery and her unwavering stance for what is right.

Sadly, what the gentlewoman feared is now our reality. Just today, U.S. forces participated in an airstrike against the Assad regime under the umbrella of the same AUMF. This is just the latest example of this virtual endless war we are able to wage in the Middle East and beyond.

As of January 2013, DOD reported 7,008 U.S. military deaths in the war on terror in addition to the over 50,000 that have been wounded. This does not include the huge numbers of civilians killed and families that have been impacted by the U.S. military machine. This is compounded by the harsh reality that, according to Pentagon statistics, suicide, not combat, is the leading killer of U.S. troops deployed to the Middle East to fight Islamic State militants. Between 2001 and 2010, the rate of suicide in the military has doubled.

When we decide to commit our troops to our mission, it needs to be with

clear goals and the explicit approval of Congress, approval that aligns with the goals of the administration and the Commander in Chief. Anything less puts personnel at risk, draining vital resources, finances, and our military.

We are taking our military away from readiness everywhere. We are making tactical and deliberate actions less feasible by spreading our military capacity thin. We are not doing our job if we allow *carte blanche* to any President to wage a nebulous war.

This is not just a bipartisan issue, this is an American issue.

I have voted against funding bills that maintain operations under the 2001 AUMF under the previous administration and feel no differently today. Quite frankly, based on the actions of this President, I have even less confidence that he has a reasonable and targeted plan to deal with such a complex military issue.

We need a deliberate process. We need a new AUMF that establishes strict parameters, attainable goals, and, most importantly, accountability. There is a real cost here, a human cost here; so whether it is an additional 1 or 1,000, our troops demand more, our allies demand more, and this country of ours deserves more.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) for that very powerful statement and also for reminding us that this should not be a partisan issue.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHIO), who has been very diligent in his effort to repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force.

Mr. YOHIO. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for organizing this very important Special Order. This is something that she has been a champion on. This is my third term, and we have been talking about this for 4 years. Enough is enough. It is time to end this.

I rise today in support of Congress reclaiming its authority under Article I, section 8, clause 11 of the Constitution. The United States must have a clear strategy with well-defined goals to counter nonstate actors like ISIS that threaten the United States. They threaten our national security interests. We must also develop clear legal authority for our military to take action against these groups. Ending the 2001 AUMF is a crucial part of that effort.

According to scholars at Brown University's Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs, our government, our taxpayers, have spent \$4.8 trillion on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, paid for almost entirely by borrowing.

As of today, 6,925 American soldiers have given their lives serving our country in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Inherent Resolve, and Operation Freedom's Sentinel, ac-

cording to the Department of Defense. But what about the costs to take care of these young men and women for the next 60, 70, and 80 years in our country?

While our brave men and women in uniform continue to fight in the sands of Iraq and Syria and the mountains of Afghanistan, we have gone through three Presidential administrations without a statement articulating what victory is, except that "terrorism must be defeated."

No one disagrees with that goal, but it is an uncertain way to order our Nation's military posture and to commit our young men and women in the military serving this Nation without a clear, defined goal. We have been at war in Afghanistan for 16 years, yet the Taliban controls or contests 40 percent of Afghan districts, according to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

The U.S. intelligence community's worldwide threat assessment states that "the overall situation in Afghanistan will very likely continue to deteriorate, even if international support is sustained," and that "endemic state weaknesses, the government's political fragility, deficiencies of the Afghan National Security Forces, Taliban persistence, and regional interference will remain key impediments to improvement."

In addition to Afghanistan, the United States has also been involved in Iraq, on and off, since 2003.

Dr. James Zogby of the Arab American Institute conducted a poll of Iraqi public opinion in 2016, which found that 94 percent of Iraqis had an unfavorable attitude about the United States. Ninety-four percent of Iraqis polled say they do not think the U.S. contributes to peace and stability in the Arab world.

We need a much clearer strategy for our men and women in uniform than to tell them just to keep doing the same thing over and over again. We all know what the definition of insanity is, and we need to do better for them and for our partners around the world.

Our Nation has arrived at a historic and constitutional moment. Prior to President Trump's inauguration, President Obama released a framework outlining his administration's formal legal view on the use of military force against Islamic terror groups around the globe. That report relied heavily on the 2001 AUMF, which has been used to justify numerous American military operations against an ever-expanding number of terror groups, many of which have only slight links to the perpetrators of the September 11, 2001, attacks.

In reality, our loose interpretation of the 2001 AUMF to have a perpetual war against terror might as well be using the authorization that Thomas Jefferson used to go after the Barbary pirates on the shores of Tripoli the way this has been stretched over and over again. It is unconscionable.

I hope that President Trump's administration will not continue to rely

on that same legal framework but, rather, that he will formally ask Congress to pass a new authorization with a clear directive of what success is for the use of force that will not perpetually operate in constitutional gray areas.

Strikes against groups like al-Shabaab in Somalia take place in constitutional twilight zones where the Constitution's distribution of authority to use force is uncertain, as Justice Jackson wrote in *Youngstown v. Sawyer*.

To better preserve our Constitution's separation of powers structure, Congress must make it a priority to develop clear legal authority for American military action against Islamist terror organizations. Further, such authorization should be structured so it will not turn into the expanding grant of power like the 2001 AUMF has done.

If we fail to pass a new AUMF, it would do our servicemen and -women, as well as the American public, a fundamental disservice. It would prolong authorization of an endless war.

It is time to end the Middle East conflict. Let's end the authorization of the 2001 AUMF. Right now, I fear that many of our military operations do not have congressional authorization and do not comply with the clear statement of Article I, section 8, clause 11 of the Constitution that gives Congress the power to declare war.

To show our servicemen and -women we support them, to uphold the Constitution, and for the good of our Nation, I hope we can work on the passage of a new AUMF with deliberate speed.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman. Her commitment to this cause is commendable.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman Yoho for his clear and concise statement laying out how explicit the Constitution is as it relates to matters of war and peace and how we must debate both if we are going to continue to use force. We look forward to a bipartisan effort this year to get us where we need to be, and that is to repeal this authorization. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), who is the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and whom I served with on the committee for many years, and who really has a very clear understanding of foreign and military policy and has been such a leader on so many issues and someone on whom we rely on so many fronts.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman LEE. We are all grateful to you for being so clear and so principled.

As I have often said, Congress must fulfill its constitutional obligation to consider an updated AUMF, and as my colleagues said, that stands for the Authorization for the Use of Military Force. Right now, the administration is still using the authorization we

passed after September 11, 2001, in the legal justification to fight ISIS. That is deeply problematic.

The 2001 AUMF has none of the limits many of us are seeking. We are a Congress. We are not a rubber stamp to any President. We have a right to vote on issues such as war and peace.

U.S. leadership to defeat ISIS is critical, but this doesn't require a large-scale deployment of U.S. forces. With American leadership, we were able to prevent the wholesale slaughter of the Yazidi people.

Iraqi partners were able to maintain control of the Mosul Dam, which, if breached by ISIS, could have resulted in death and displacement of up to 2 million people and endangered American personnel in Iraq. With our support, local forces have taken back about 80 percent of the territory from ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

So another large-scale, open-ended commitment of American troops is certainly not the answer. The disastrous intervention in Iraq last decade set the stage for the rise of ISIS in the first place. The 2001 AUMF has no limits at all on U.S. ground troops.

As troop levels continue to rise in the fight against ISIS, we just cannot put our heads in the sand. We need to sit together as a deliberative body and make these important decisions, not give any President or any administration a blank check.

I am working on legislation to limit the authority Congress provided after September 11. We need to tailor this authority to the threat we face today. September 11 happened 16 years ago. We need new parameters to define our mission and our goals. I voted for that AUMF 16 years ago, but I never would have imagined that 16 years later it would still be there and give a blank check to any President who would use it anytime, anyplace, and to do anything. So we must fulfill our constitutional responsibility and consider what an appropriate authorization should include.

Using a 2001 authorization for a 2017 conflict sets a terrible constitutional precedent. Congress has a vital constitutional responsibility over America's war powers. This is one of the most important decisions we are charged with making. When we fail to live up to that responsibility, we weaken the balance of power that is the bedrock of our democracy. Considering an updated AUMF is not easy, but it is our job. We should do our job.

President Obama came to Congress well over a year ago with a proposed AUMF. Not many people cared for it, but it was a proposed AUMF. We could have changed it—it was a starting point—but we didn't do it. We threw it away because it just got too hard. That cannot happen again.

Congress has a responsibility to do its part here, and, unfortunately, we are not meeting that responsibility. We owe it to the American people and we owe it our men and women in uniform

to do our job. Congressional inaction on an AUMF is inexcusable.

□ 1815

I want to say that it is a separate issue from the recent strikes against Assad. Congress has made no authorization whatsoever for sustained military action against Assad. The 60-day clock started ticking when the President notified Congress of his missile strike.

The administration must come to Congress on that issue as well. There cannot be long-term military action against Assad without Congressional say-so.

Assad is a bad guy, and I think that he should be deposed, quite frankly. I think that any future for Syria cannot include Assad, who has murdered hundreds of thousands of his own people.

But whether the United States must involve itself in every single war and ground troops using an outdated authorization for the use of force just strikes me as being something that should not happen and will lead us down a path in the future where we can't get out of it.

I want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE). She has always stood up for her beliefs, whether they seem popular or unpopular when it happened. That is just the kind of people we want to serve in Congress: someone who speaks out and has been a consistent fighter.

I am proud to join with her tonight, and I hope that more colleagues on both sides of the aisle will understand that this is an important constitutional principle. It is not a matter of who is in power, who is the President, what party has the majority. As Americans and as legislators, we should all be very concerned about giving any President a blank check to go to war.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for that very powerful statement and for really laying out the fact that Congress is missing in action and that this resolution, this AUMF, must be repealed so that we can move forward and make some determinations as to what Congress' role will be and what we think should happen in terms of our strategy as it relates to going to war.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for being here tonight and I thank him for his leadership and his expertise.

Madam Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES), who has been a friend, a supporter, who constantly is talking about why we need to protect our troops, support our troops, keep them out of harm's way, support our veterans. He is a great American, and I have the pleasure of working with him on so many issues.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for the leadership and also this opportunity. I could not agree more with where we are and why we are on the floor tonight.

If you believe in the Constitution, which the majority of us do because we raise our hands when we are sworn in, then we need to do our constitutional responsibility. What has been said tonight by my colleagues and will be ended by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) in just a few minutes is the fact that we do not do our constitutional duty or responsibility.

The 2001 AUMF to talk about going after Osama bin Laden after 9/11, meaning Afghanistan, made sense. The AUMF in 2002 should have never passed this House. I regret that I voted for it because Iraq was an unnecessary war. But that is history now.

What we are talking about is learning from history and dealing with the present and the future. Therefore, there is no reason that the leadership of the House, Mr. RYAN, will not permit the committees of jurisdiction to bring forward a new AUMF. It could be a blanket AUMF or it could mean Syria or maybe Afghanistan.

I have joined with colleagues on the other side, including the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), to put in H.R. 1666 that says, after 16 years, there needs to be a debate on the future involvement of the American people and the military into Afghanistan.

We have 300 Members of Congress sitting on the floor day in and day out who have never been part of a debate or a vote on the future of Afghanistan. After 16 years, \$800 billion spent, 2,000 Americans killed and 20,000 wounded, if we do not have a debate on whether we stay in Afghanistan or we talk about coming home, then our leadership in the House are not doing their constitutional duty either.

Madam Speaker, tonight I wanted to be very supportive, as I will be. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and I have been on each other's bills as it deals with Syria, Afghanistan, or Iraq. It is time for us to demand from our leadership—I do not blame the Presidents, whether it be Trump or Obama, I do not blame them, because it is our responsibility.

James Madison was very clear, and I am going to paraphrase very quickly. It is the legislative branch that will debate and declare war, not the executive branch. What we have done with these AUMFs from 2001 and 2002, we have abdicated our responsibilities.

I know how the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) feels, and all those who spoke tonight and those who are not here tonight to speak, how we all feel. But it is up to us to demand from our leadership. Don't wait for a President to give direction, because Madison was very clear. It is our responsibility.

Madam Speaker, I have written five or six letters to Mr. RYAN, the Speaker of the House. I have written him additional letters with my colleagues on the other side asking him to permit us to meet our constitutional responsibility. At this point we have had no luck, and I am asking Mr. RYAN tonight, the Speaker of the House, to di-

rect the committees of jurisdiction to come forward with one of these bills that have been introduced by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and other Members of the Democratic Party and those of us in the Republican Party to come forward and let's have a refresher course, so to speak, on the constitutional responsibility.

I have Camp Lejeune Marine Base in my district. I talked to marines as recently as 2 weeks ago. One has been five times to Afghanistan. He said it is not worth a dime to be there. We are spending billions and billions of dollars, and kids still getting killed.

I have signed over 10,000 letters to families and extended families who have lost loved ones because I knew I should never have voted to go into Iraq. That is my mistake, and I am living with my mistake. But what I am trying to do now is to join you and others to say we have a constitutional responsibility to debate war. If we are going to send our young men and women to die in war, we need to debate it.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for this opportunity. I look forward to working with her as we go forward. I think we really need to put pressure on the leadership to allow us to meet our responsibilities. I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for giving me this opportunity to be here with my colleagues.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for his statement tonight and for his leadership. I think, listening to him, listening to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHIO), and working with our colleagues in a bipartisan way, you know, we have to keep hope alive on this because our young men and women, our Constitution, our country, deserves it. You have been here from the beginning in terms of trying to help put Congress back into action because we have been missing in action.

Madam Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA), my colleague from the Silicon Valley, right next door to my district, who has come to Congress and has hit the ground running. He is a true advocate on so many issues as it relates to peace and justice and security.

Mr. KHANNA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for her vision in making sure Congress votes on matters of war and peace.

When we were attacked, after 9/11, I, like many Americans, supported strikes on the people who attacked us. But no one in this country would have thought that a resolution would be used for perpetual war.

Madam Speaker, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) had the courage back then and the foresight to stand up with courage and stand up against a resolution that has provided

a blank check for the last 16 years. I do believe that that is the type of political courage that one day will be remembered in history, and I applaud the gentlewoman for that.

We have seen that, since 2001, the terrorists, which were contained on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, have spread. They have spread to the Middle East. They have spread to Africa. And it is about time that we ask: What have all these interventions gotten us?

And this is not a partisan issue, as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) has mentioned and as the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) just articulated. It goes back to our founding principles of John Quincy Adams, an early President who said: "We ought not to go overseas to slay monsters."

And he said the reason we shouldn't do that is we should give people who seek freedom our voice and our prayers; but if we go out to destroy monsters, we actually will be seen not as a liberating force, but as a dictatorial force because we often won't know who the truly freedom-seeking people are.

I wish every Member of Congress, every Senator would read John Quincy Adams' insight so that we had more restraint.

Consider the issue of Afghanistan, where 40 percent of the country is not under our control. And here is the thing: I know this region. I was born here. But being of South Asian origin, on the Pakistan-India border, where there are 3,000 terrorists, there are 150,000 troops to take care of that.

Does anyone think sending 10,000 troops again and again has accomplished anything?

It has not. All it is doing is further antagonizing people and putting our troops at risk.

Then when we called for regime change in 2011 with Syria and Assad, we made Syria a magnet for terrorist groups. Now in Yemen, where we are aiding the Saudi Arabian Government, which is aligned, ironically, with al-Qaida, and al-Qaida, which has claimed responsibility for the shoe bomber and the underwear bomber in this country, we are aiding and intervening in a place where we are actually supporting groups that are harming us.

All the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is saying is we ought to debate these issues, that the American people ought to know what these interventions are getting us; why they are not making us more safe and why we are not having a thoughtful policy.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the gentlewoman from California's (Ms. LEE) vision and I applaud her leadership. I know that history will vindicate her.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA) for those kind words, but also for his clarity and his vision and understanding that we must repeal this authorization to use force and put Congress back in the mix where we should have been from day one. I want to

thank him again very much for being here.

Madam Speaker, may I ask how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) has 1 minute remaining.

Ms. LEE. I will close now. Once again, I ask our Speaker a very simple question, and that is why he has not scheduled a debate on this vital issue that affects our national security.

We asked over and over again for a vote to repeal this authorization. We want a debate and we want to have a new vote based on the current realities of what is taking place as it relates to the use of force by our own government.

In February of 2015, Congressman ELIOT ENGEL mentioned that President Obama sent to Congress an ISIS-specific AUMF, and it was never taken up. There were no actions, no hearings, no formal debate. Not one vote.

We have a new President that is continuing to use the outdated 2001 AUMF in expanded ways, including justifying sending more troops to fight ISIS in Syria and spending more taxpayer dollars on war and putting our young men and women in harm's way.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank all of the Members who were here last night. Let's hope that this discussion will help more Members come to the floor and talk about why we need the Speaker to bring up the bill to repeal the authorization to use force.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. SWALWELL of California (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today through May 25 on account of birth of child.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 419. An act to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.

S. 583. An act to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds to hire veterans as career law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, May 19, 2017, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1369. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral James D. Syring, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1370. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's 2017 Annual Report to Congress on Chemical and Biological Warfare Defense, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1523(a); Public Law 103-160, Sec. 1703; (107 Stat. 1854); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1371. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Advanced Arresting Gear Selected Acquisition Report for the most recently concluded fiscal quarter, pursuant to Sec. 125 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017, Public Law 114-328, and Secs. 2432 and 2433(g) of title 10 U.S.C.; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1372. A letter from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting the Office's report on discretionary appropriations legislation within seven calendar days of enactment, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 901(a)(7)(B); Public Law 99-177, Sec. 251(a)(7)(B) (as amended by Public Law 114-113, Sec. 1003); (129 Stat. 3035); to the Committee on the Budget.

1373. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria — Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Program [CFDA Number: 84.371C] [Docket No.: ED-2015-OESE-0129] (RIN: 1810-AB25) received May 16, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

1374. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Promoting Diversification of Ownership in the Broadcasting Services [MB Docket No.: 07-294]; Amendment of Part 1 of the Commission's Rules, Concerning Practice and Procedure, Amendment of CORES Registration System [MD Docket No.: 10-234] received May 16, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1375. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.3555(e) of the Commission's Rules, National Television Multiple Ownership Rule [MB Docket No.: 13-236] received May 16, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1376. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-125, pursuant to Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1377. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-136, pursuant to Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1378. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-083, pursuant to Section 36(c) of

the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1379. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-107, pursuant to Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1380. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report containing information about a proposed transaction, pursuant to Sec. 40(g)(2) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1381. A letter from the Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the semiannual report prepared by the Inspector General of the Federal Reserve System for the six-month period ending March 31, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1382. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's semiannual report from the Office of Inspector General for the period October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1383. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's Major final rule — Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; U.S. Navy Training Activities in the Gulf of Alaska Temporary Maritime Activities Area [Docket No.: 14125997-7365-02] (RIN: 0648-BE67) received May 16, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

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. CONAWAY: Committee on Agriculture. H.R. 953. A bill to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-131 Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 1726. A bill to amend title 14, United States Code, to improve the organization of such title and to incorporate certain transfers and modifications into such title, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-132). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

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. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO):

H.R. 2510. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. THORNBERRY:

H.R. 2511. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to streamline the acquisition system, invest early in acquisition programs, improve the acquisition workforce, and improve transparency in the acquisition system; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Mrs. DINGELL, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 2512. A bill to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to expand foster parent training and provides new appropriations to support the obtainment of a driver's license; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. HARTZLER:

H.R. 2513. A bill to allow certain off-duty law enforcement officers and retired law enforcement officers to carry a concealed firearm to protect children in a school zone; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 2514. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure that revenues collected from passengers as aviation security fees are used to help finance the costs of aviation security screening by repealing a requirement that a portion of such fees be credited as offsetting receipts and deposited in the general fund of the Treasury; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 2515. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to remove travel agencies from the partial list of establishments having no retail concept for the purposes of certain exemptions under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. YOUNG of Iowa (for himself, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. BLUM):

H.R. 2516. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to waive the individual mandate in areas with no Exchange plans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TAYLOR (for himself and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 2517. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for requirements relating to the reassignment of Department of Veterans Affairs senior executive employees; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 2518. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2018 and 2019, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. WALZ (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. BACON, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BERA, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BLUM, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BOST, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. COLE, Mr. CORREA, Mr. CRIST, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DUNN, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESTY of

Connecticut, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GALLEGO, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. JONES, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KIND, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KNIGHT, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MAST, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MENG, Mrs. NOEM, Ms. NORTON, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PANNETTA, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. POLIS, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. RASKIN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. TITUS, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALDEN, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. ZELDIN):

H.R. 2519. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. FLORES):

H.R. 2520. A bill to require providers of broadband internet access service and edge services to clearly and conspicuously notify users of the privacy policies of such providers, to give users opt-in or opt-out approval rights with respect to the use of, disclosure of, and access to user information collected by such providers based on the level of sensitivity of such information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. SANFORD):

H.R. 2521. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to include South Carolina as a part of the Virginia/Carolina peanut producing region for purposes of appointment to the Peanut Standards Board; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. BANKS of Indiana:

H.R. 2522. A bill to require the Inspector General of the Environmental Protection Agency to submit reports to Congress on paper and property inventory, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Science, Space, and Technology, 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 Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. LEE, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H.R. 2523. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 with respect to the scope of employee pension benefit plans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 2524. A bill to provide for conveyance of a former immigration and customs facility from the Department of Homeland Security

to Ventura County, California; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. LANDEVIN, Mr. TAKANO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HIMES, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CLAY, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas):

H.R. 2525. A bill to improve the financial literacy of students; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. JUDY CHU of California (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. LEE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. BEYER, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois):

H.R. 2526. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reinstate the authority of the Secretary of Education to make Federal Direct Stafford Loans to graduate and professional students; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. TITUS, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. LEE, and Mr. COURTNEY):

H.R. 2527. A bill to amend title 11 of the United States Code to modify the dischargeability of debts for certain educational payments and loans; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. DEGETTE (for herself and Mr. COFFMAN):

H.R. 2528. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to provide that Federal law shall not preempt State law; to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. EMMER:

H.R. 2529. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a national intersection and interchange safety construction program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 2530. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make residents of Puerto Rico eligible for the earned income tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 2531. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to apply Medicare part B deemed enrollment process to residents of Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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 Ms. GRANGER (for herself and Mrs. LAWRENCE):

H.R. 2532. A bill to realign structures and reallocate resources in the Federal Government in keeping with the core belief that

families are the best protection for children and the bedrock of any society to bolster United States diplomacy targeted at ensuring that every child can grow up in a permanent, safe, nurturing, and loving family, and to ensure that intercountry adoption to the United States becomes a viable and fully developed option for providing families for children in need, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. STEFANIK):

H.R. 2533. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for parent savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KIND (for himself, Mr. PASCRELL, and Ms. DELBENE):

H.R. 2534. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the rate of tax on domestic manufacturing income to 20 percent; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself and Mr. HARPER):

H.R. 2535. A bill to amend title XXIX of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the program under such title relating to lifespan respite care; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 2536. A bill to provide for grants for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy improvements at public school facilities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. MEADOWS (for himself and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey):

H.R. 2537. A bill to designate the area between the intersections of International Drive Northwest and Van Ness Street Northwest and International Drive Northwest and International Place Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, as "Liu Xiaobo Plaza", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 2538. A bill to provide certain workplace protections to interns relating to discriminatory practices; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, Oversight and Government Reform, and the Judiciary, 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 Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. CAPUANO, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Ms. ESHOO):

H.R. 2539. A bill to reestablish the Office of Noise Abatement and Control in the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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 Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 2540. A bill to amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to allow the District of Columbia to receive Federal funding under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H.R. 2541. A bill to provide for a report on the role of incubators and accelerators in the commercialization of federally funded research and regional economic development; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. BEYER, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H.R. 2542. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to direct the Administrator of General Services to incorporate bird-safe building materials and design features into public buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 2543. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for 2 years the exclusion from gross income of discharges of qualified principal residence indebtedness; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio (for himself and Mrs. DAVIS of California):

H.R. 2544. A bill to require the Director of the National Institutes of Health to carry out a study to add to the scientific knowledge on reducing teacher stress and increasing teacher retention and well-being, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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 Mrs. TORRES (for herself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. COLE, Mr. LAMALFA, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H.R. 2545. A bill to reauthorize the special diabetes programs for Indians; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California:

H.R. 2546. A bill to ensure the Chief Information Office of the Federal Communications Commission has a significant role in decisions related to information technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WOODALL (for himself and Ms. BROWNLEY of California):

H.R. 2547. A bill to expand the Department of Veterans Affairs medical professionals who may qualify to perform physical examinations on eligible veterans and issue medical certificates required for operation of a commercial motor vehicle, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ARRINGTON (for himself and Mr. KHANNA):

H.J. Res. 101. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to limit the number of terms an individual may serve as a Member of Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas (for himself, Mr. NEAL, and Mr. REICHERT):

H. Con. Res. 54. Concurrent resolution expressing support for strengthening engagement between the United States and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. YOH, Mr. BARR, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. PERRY, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. RENACCI):

H. Con. Res. 55. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should withdraw from the

Paris Agreement, adopted in December 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MEADOWS (for himself, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. CUMMINGS):

H. Con. Res. 56. Concurrent resolution expressing support for designation of October 28 as "Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROSS:

H. Con. Res. 57. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a museum should be established and operated in Washington, D.C. for the purpose of memorializing the victims of communist regimes, educating Americans and foreign visitors about the ideology of communism and its history, and encouraging visitors to meet the challenges of the human rights abuses presented by communist regimes today; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. SIRE, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. POLIS, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. HURD, Mr. VALADAO, Ms. MCSALLY, Ms. SANCHEZ, and Mr. POE of Texas):

H. Res. 336. A resolution reaffirming a strong commitment to the United States-Mexico partnership; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. EVANS, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. LUTKEMEYER):

H. Res. 337. A resolution expressing support for designation of May as Stroke Awareness Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. JUDY CHU of California (for herself, Ms. MENG, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. SANCHEZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. LEE, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. VELAZQUEZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mrs. DAVIS of California):

H. Res. 338. A resolution recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month in May as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. COURTNEY (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H. Res. 339. A resolution calling upon the United States Senate to give its advice and consent to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. ESPAILLAT:

H. Res. 340. A resolution in support of baseball as the pastime of the United States and condemning racial slurs; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. KEATING, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TONKO, Ms. MICHELLE LUAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GAETZ, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr.

KILMER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. GALLEG0, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. WITTMAN, and Ms. ROSEN):

H. Res. 341. A resolution recognizing the contributions of Defense laboratories to national security and supporting the designation of May 18, 2017, as the "Department of Defense Laboratory Day 2017"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself and Mr. DIAZ-BALART):

H. Res. 342. A resolution recognizing the essential contributions of frontline health workers to strengthening the United States national security and economic prosperity, sustaining and expanding progress on global health, and saving the lives of millions of women, men, and children around the world; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H. Res. 343. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding steps that Congress should take to restore democracy and change the way we do politics in the United States by reducing the influence of money and corporations and promoting the participation of the people in politics and government; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, and the Judiciary, 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.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

41. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, relative to House Resolution No. 38, memorializing the Congress of the United States to repeal the standards set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency on portable fuel container design; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

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. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 2510.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, Clause 3, and Clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. THORNBERRY:

H.R. 2511.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress "to provide for the common Defence", "to raise and support Armies", "to provide and maintain a Navy" and "to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces" as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 2512.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the

United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mrs. HARTZLER:

H.R. 2513.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 3 and 18 of Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution. Article I, Section 8, clause 3, the Interstate Commerce Clause, gives Congress the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes. Article I, Section 8, clause 18, the Necessary and Proper Clause, gives Congress the power 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. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 2514.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

By Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 2515.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. YOUNG of Iowa:

H.R. 2516.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. TAYLOR:

H.R. 2517.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

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;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and Post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

and Offenses against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such

Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings; And

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. HUNTER:

H.R. 2518.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. WALZ:

H.R. 2519.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 5 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 2520.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The "necessary and proper" clause of Article I Section 8.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 2521.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. BANKS of Indiana:

H.R. 2522.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, giving Congress the power to "regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes."

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 2523.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 2524.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 2525.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution relating to the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States)

By Ms. JUDY CHU of California:

H.R. 2526.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. 1, Sec. 8 "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."

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 2527.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. DEGETTE:

H.R. 2528.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Amendment X to the Constitution of the United States of America

By Mr. EMMER:

H.R. 2529.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 7—

The Congress shall have Power . . . To establish Post Offices and Post Roads

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 2530.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I section I of the U.S. Constitution
“All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.”

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 2531.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section I of the U.S. Constitution
“All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.”

By Ms. GRANGER:

H.R. 2532.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution that the Congress shall have power 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. KATKO:

H.R. 2533.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution: The Congress shall have the Power To law and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. KIND:

H.R. 2534.

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”

By Mr. LANGEVIN:

H.R. 2535.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 2536.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the US Constitution

By Mr. MEADOWS:

H.R. 2537.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 2538.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 2539.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 2540.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PETERS:

H.R. 2541.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution

By Mr. QUIGLEY:

H.R. 2542.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 2543.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution and the 16th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:

H.R. 2544.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: 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 Mrs. TORRES:

H.R. 2545.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1: 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 Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California:

H.R. 2546.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. WOODALL:

H.R. 2547.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically the power to provide for the general Welfare of the United States and establish Post Offices and post Roads.

By Mr. ARRINGTON:

H.J. Res. 101.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V: The Congress, whenever two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 10: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. BUDD, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. FLORES, Mr. PALMER, and Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 23: Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 38: Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota.

H.R. 91: Mr. CORREA, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. SABLON, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 104: Ms MOORE.

H.R. 110: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 113: Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 173: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 256: Mr. JODY B, HICE of Georgia and Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 257: Mr. MEADOWS and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 305: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 350: Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida and Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 358: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. MASSIE.

H.R. 426: Mr. TROTT, Mr. GALLAGHER, and Mr. SMUCKER.

H.R. 459: Mr. SMUCKER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Ms. BASS.

H.R. 468: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 490: Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 500: Mr. ISSA.

H.R. 525: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 529: Mr. LOFGREN.

H.R. 619: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 695: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 747: Mr. ROTHFUS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 754: Ms. BONAMICI and Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 772: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 807: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 816: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 820: Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. BOST.

H.R. 821: Mr. KIHUEN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 837: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 850: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 883: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 909: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 916: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 919: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 931: Mr. UPTON, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. VIS-CLOSKEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 953: Mr. UPTON and Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 964: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 976: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 1005: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1017: Mr. CUMMINGS and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 1036: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 1046: Mr. BOST.

H.R. 1054: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 1057: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER.

H.R. 1090: Ms. ROSEN and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 1092: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 1098: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1104: Mr. JONES and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1156: Mr. SMUCKER.

H.R. 1162: Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1164: Mr. SMITH of Texas and Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 1171: Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr.

BACON, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MENG, Mr. TURNER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. COLE, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 1200: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1235: Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RUSH, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. EVANS, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1243: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 1247: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1279: Mrs. RADEWAGEN.
H.R. 1284: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 1315: Mr. CARTER of Texas.
H.R. 1328: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 1329: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1339: Mr. BANKS of Indiana.
H.R. 1344: Mr. HECK, Mr. COOK, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1347: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 1361: Mr. TURNER, Ms. MENG, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 1370: Mr. VELA.
H.R. 1399: Ms. ROSEN.
H.R. 1405: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 1414: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1422: Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 1439: Mr. CARBAJAL.
H.R. 1441: Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 1443: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1494: Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. ROSS, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 1545: Mr. SABLAN, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. PETERS, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.

H.R. 1558: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
H.R. 1566: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1568: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1599: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 1625: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 1626: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. BARTON.
H.R. 1661: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 1676: Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 1698: Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 1711: Mr. WALZ and Ms. LEE.

H.R. 1730: Mr. HILL.

H.R. 1740: Ms. TENNEY and Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 1776: Ms. PINGREE and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 1794: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1796: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 1810: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 1820: Mr. COHEN, Mr. CORREA, and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 1823: Mr. CORREA and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 1824: Mr. CORREA and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 1825: Mr. BOST, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. LONG, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. DEFazio, Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 1847: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 1865: Mr. SMUCKER.

H.R. 1873: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1881: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mr. DAVISON.

H.R. 1952: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MOULTON, and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 1953: Mr. BARLETTA and Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 1955: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1968: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1988: Mr. PETERS and Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 2004: Mr. MITCHELL.

H.R. 2012: Mrs. LOWEY and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 2052: Miss RICE of New York and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2170: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 2171: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 2179: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 2181: Mr. HOLDING.

H.R. 2215: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. DEFazio, and Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 2228: Mr. SMUCKER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. YOHO, Mr. KIND, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 2234: Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 2243: Mr. KIND and Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 2249: Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 2260: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 2309: Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. PETERSON, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2317: Mr. KILMER and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 2319: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 2320: Mr. SABLAN and Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 2347: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 2353: Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, and Mr. CULBERSON.

H.R. 2359: Mr. TROTT and Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 2366: Ms. ROSEN.

H.R. 2372: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. POSEY, Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida, Mr. FASO, Mr. WOODALL, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 2389: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 2392: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 2428: Ms. NORTON, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 2452: Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2465: Ms. PINGREE, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. LANCE, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BEYER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Ms. MENG, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 2466: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 2472: Mr. COHEN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. CLAY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2499: Mr. CARBAJAL and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.J. Res. 48: Mr. MOULTON and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.J. Res. 100: Mr. SANFORD.

H. Con. Res. 8: Mr. HIMES and Mr. SOTO.

H. Con. Res. 41: Mr. BANKS of Indiana.

H. Con. Res. 45: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H. Res. 31: Mr. BARLETTA.

H. Res. 200: Mr. HIMES, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. STEWART, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Ms. ROSEN.

H. Res. 220: Mr. DENHAM.

H. Res. 244: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H. Res. 249: Mr. AMODEI.

H. Res. 256: Mrs. HARTZLER and Mr. RUSH.

H. Res. 282: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H. Res. 311: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. BERA, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H. Res. 327: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. KILDEE.



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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.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.

Eternal God, the source of all our praise, we magnify Your Name. We place our trust in You, for You are our helper throughout life's seasons.

Be mindful of our Senators and bless them. Keep them on the path that leads to life. May Your peace stay with them, guarding their hearts and minds.

Lord, give them the wisdom to practice integrity in all of their conduct. Keep them from stumbling and slipping as You prepare them to stand before Your presence with great joy.

We pray in Your merciful 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 (Mr. STRANGE). The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the cloture vote on the Branstad nomination, the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 56 and 57.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc

with no intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE INTERNET

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I don't have to tell colleagues how important the internet and other wireless technologies have been in our modern society. From the way students learn to the way we do business and even the way we as Senators keep in touch with our constituents, these advancements have in many ways fundamentally changed how we operate. It is important to remember that these groundbreaking technological advances didn't just come about because of government mandates or heavy-handed bureaucracy; they grew out of an environment that allowed for, and actually encouraged, innovation.

From the Clinton years onward, there was a bipartisan consensus that we should maintain the kind of light regulatory touch that allows this innovation to thrive in the first place in order to open the door to further advancements.

Unfortunately, that changed under the Obama administration, which used the FCC to force through antiquated regulations designed for an age of rotary phones and switchboards. Today, however, we finally have an FCC chairman who recognizes that we live in an entirely new era—an era of smartphones and laptops and other mobile devices. We have a chairman who believes that innovation, ingenuity, growth, and job creation aren't dirty words to be stifled with unnecessary redtape.

Today, it is expected that Chairman Pai and Commissioner O'Rielly will take the first necessary step to address a deeply flawed Obama-era diktat that empowered bureaucrats with vast new powers to control the internet through archaic rotary telephone regulations from nearly a century ago. No matter how well intended, this overreach threatened the very innovation that brought us the internet and other technological advancements in the first place.

I want to commend Chairman Pai for taking this preliminary step to address the issue, which will also open the door for bipartisan congressional action to keep the internet open for consumers permanently. Later today, Senator THUNE and others will come to the floor to talk more about this issue. I look forward to hearing what they have to say and thank them for continuing this important conversation.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, too many Americans woke up this morning worried about the rising costs and limited options they are experiencing under ObamaCare. As they went to work, too many struggled with the reality that their ObamaCare premiums could take an even larger bite out of their paycheck next year.

This afternoon, as they pick up their kids, too many will worry that they may have a hard time finding an ObamaCare plan at all for next year, with many counties having only one option left on the exchanges. Unfortunately, these are the realities for far too many Americans under ObamaCare, and they are miles away from what Democrats promised.

In my home State, we endured large premium hikes this year of up to 47 percent. For many working families, a spike in premiums like that can make it nearly impossible to afford health

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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insurance at all. To make matters worse, under ObamaCare, many Kentuckians don't have the option to select the best provider for themselves and their families.

Let's take a look at the chart behind me. In Kentucky, under ObamaCare, 49 percent of our counties—49 percent—have one insurer, one. For Kentuckians in half of our counties, half have one choice. Really, when you have one choice, you have no choice at all.

It is not as though this situation is unique to my State either. This year, there are 26 States with at least one county where residents have only a single insurance option under ObamaCare. That means millions of Americans living in more than 1,000 counties across the country really have no choice at all—no choice at all—when it comes to ObamaCare.

Those families didn't get the increased choices they were promised under that law. They have been left to shoulder the burden nonetheless, and things have only gotten worse over time.

In fact, just this week, people on the ObamaCare exchanges in three more States—Vermont, Virginia, and Oregon—learned they could face double-digit premium increases as high as 20 percent next year. I would ask our Democratic friends, are they really OK—are you really OK with ObamaCare's continuing attacks on the middle class?

One constituent from Lexington in my State wrote me about her frustration with the status quo under ObamaCare. Here is what she had to say:

My insurance is way more than what I can afford. I can't imagine many others who can pay more for health insurance than their mortgage.

She and her husband had shopped on the exchanges for healthcare, but the lowest premium options were around \$1,000 a month—listen to this—\$1,000 a month, and that got them a \$10,000 deductible; \$1,000 a month would only get a policy with a \$10,000 deductible. So they decided to go uninsured and pay the penalty. She said:

The cost will be minor compared to the useless premium cost.

The last part of this Kentucky woman's message is something I think we should all remember throughout this debate. She said:

Please remember that there are many people depending on Congress to set this . . . right.

Americans like her are counting on all of us to leave ObamaCare's failures where they belong—in the past. For years, they have suffered under a collapsing system. Yet our friends across the aisle continued to defend the broken law regardless of its significant problems—problems that even many of them have, by the way, started to acknowledge.

Last week, Senate Democrats sent me a letter effectively admitting that the ObamaCare status quo is

unsustainable. I hope that means they are prepared to join us in moving beyond their failed law. Otherwise, Senate Democrats are essentially telling the American people that they are OK with the status quo and that ObamaCare's collapsing markets, double-digit premium increases, and counties with only one insurer represent the new normal for healthcare in our country. Surely, they are not comfortable with that.

My constituents refuse to accept the status quo. The only question that really remains is this: Will Senate Democrats work with us to move beyond the status quo?

The entire Senate Republican Conference has been at work debating ideas and making progress. We are pursuing smarter healthcare policies for Kentuckians like the couple in Lexington and the millions more like them across the Nation who know that ObamaCare just isn't working. I hope our friends on the other side of the aisle will agree to join us in bringing some relief to all of these families who desperately need it.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appointed former FBI Director Robert Mueller as a special counsel to oversee the investigation into Russia's interference in the 2016 elections.

This was a very good first step. Mr. Rosenstein has done the right thing. I applaud his decision for both its correctness and its courage. A special counsel was much called for in this situation. Former Director Mueller is the right kind of individual for the job. I now have significantly greater confidence that the investigation will follow the facts wherever they lead. Additionally, as special counsel, Mr. Mueller must have broad latitude to pursue the Russia investigation. In the appointment order, it stipulates that the special counsel is authorized to investigate "any matters that arose or may arise directly from this investigation." That is a really important power, given recent reports about an active FBI investigation into General Flynn.

I am heartened by the news of Mr. Mueller's appointment, but it in no

way diminishes the need for Congress to play an active role in helping to get to the bottom of recent events. Intelligence Committee Chairman BARR and Ranking Member WARNER should still pursue the congressional investigation into these matters with just as much vigor. That investigation has been proceeding in a bipartisan way, and it absolutely should continue as such.

We should still seek testimony from Mr. Comey in both the Judiciary and Intelligence Committees to discuss the events surrounding his dismissal and be given access to memos and transcripts or tapes of his conversations with President Trump. Mr. Comey was central to the events of the past few weeks. We still need to hear from him. I thank the bipartisan leadership of both the Intelligence and Judiciary Committees for requesting both the records and public testimony of Director Comey.

Congress, specifically the Judiciary and Intelligence Committees, should still be given access to any transcripts or related summaries of the President's meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister and Ambassador, during which reports have alleged he may have divulged highly sensitive intelligence.

Finally, there is still a great need as before for the next FBI Director to be someone who is nonpartisan, independent, fearless, and of unimpeachable integrity. A career politician of either party or anyone who suggests a lack of impartiality, should not be considered. The appointment of Mr. Mueller is a great first step toward getting the Russia investigation back on solid ground, but these other things also need to happen: Mr. Comey testifying; the White House turning over to Congress the relevant tapes and transcripts, if they exist; and the selection of an independent, impartial FBI Director.

Later this afternoon, the Deputy Attorney General, Rod Rosenstein, will brief all 100 Senators at the request of the two leaders, the majority leader and myself. He can brief us on a great many things, including the events of Mr. Comey's dismissal and the status of the Russia investigation.

While the briefing itself will not take place in a public setting, I hope that much of what we learn today can be shared with the American public.

So in the interest of getting all the facts, we in Congress look forward to hearing from Mr. Rosenstein this afternoon. It is a sign that while we wholeheartedly applaud the appointment of a special counsel, we in Congress must continue to do our jobs as well.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, on another matter, Mr. President, criminal justice reform. Last week, Attorney General Jeff Sessions ordered Federal prosecutors to "charge and pursue the most serious readily provable offense," even for low-level drug crimes. Functionally, this means Federal prosecutors

will seek the harshest possible penalty even for nonviolent, low-level drug crimes.

This is a significant reversal from the Obama-era Smart on Crime Initiative, in which Federal prosecutors were instructed to focus on more dangerous drug traffickers and avoid charging less-serious offenders with crimes that required long, mandatory minimum sentences. As a result of the Obama policies, Federal drug cases dropped by more than 19 percent between 2012 and 2016, according to the U.S. Sentencing Commission. Cases with charges carrying longer, mandatory minimum sentences fell precipitously, from nearly 60 percent in 2012 to 45 percent last year. Thanks in part to this initiative, President Obama became the first President since Carter to leave the White House with a smaller Federal prison population than when he took office.

Meanwhile, prosecutions of the more serious crimes—the evil drug dealers, those who run the drugs, often from out of this country to here, they are the ones we can really go after and need to go after—increased by 17 percent and 14 percent, which makes it the way we can stop these evil drugs from coming into this country.

So that policy was tough on crime and smart on crime. Our law enforcement agencies have finite resources. They should be focused on combating violent crimes. When a prosecutor is spending hours in court, days, for a low-level possession charge and not having the resources to go after the drug runners, the drug dealers who poison our kids, that is misplaced priorities.

What Attorney General Sessions has just ordered is the exact opposite approach of what we need. Instead of giving judges and juries the discretion to use their judgment in sentencing, it compels prosecutors to seek as much jail time as they can get for every single offense, treating low level and high level the same. It is a blunt instrument that will result in more unnecessary, punitive sentences, overcrowding of our prisons, and will be less effective in our fight on crime. It runs completely counter to a bipartisan consensus here in Congress.

Many Members of this body, Democrats and Republicans, agree that mandatory minimum sentences have led to bloated, costly prisons, and disproportionately ravaged minority communities.

In the last Congress, a bipartisan group of Senators sought to make meaningful progress with a sentencing reform proposal that had, among its cosponsors, a diverse group of Senators, ranging from Senators DURBIN and BOOKER on the Democratic side to Senators LEE and PAUL on the conservative side. Unfortunately, those efforts to strike a compromise to bring much needed reform to our Nation's criminal justice system were derailed by the obstruction of, guess who—then-Senator

Sessions, with the cooperation of the Republican leadership. Now, after making progress under President Obama and Attorney General Holder, Attorney General Sessions has chosen to simply revert back to the one-size-fits-all approach that criminologists, police leaders, and bipartisan lawmakers have determined is not the right answer.

In order to truly be tough on crime, we must be smart on crime. This approach is dumb on crime. Congress, of course, still has the power to legislate this issue. We have the power to override the Attorney General's decision. So I hope this misguided change in the Department of Justice's policy revives a bipartisan desire to pursue sentencing reform. When we look for areas where there can be significant bipartisan cooperation, this is one of them. I hope Leader MCCONNELL will choose to pursue it.

Thank you, Mr. President.
I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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 resume consideration of the Brand nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Rachel L. Brand, of Iowa, to be Associate Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Connecticut.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I am on the floor to talk about the status of America's healthcare system. As we speak though, the country is obsessed with the question of the firing of FBI Director Comey and the appointment last night of a special counsel who is going to seek to get to the bottom of this question as to whether there was coordination between the Trump campaign and the Russian Government and their attempts to influence an American election.

There have been secret meetings happening in the Senate among Republicans—reportedly 13 Republicans, to be specific—attempting to craft a new version of legislation that passed the House of Representatives, now, I guess,

2 weeks ago, that would rob healthcare from 24 million Americans. According to the Congressional Budget Office, it would drive up costs for everyone immediately by about 15 percent to 20 percent and jeopardize the protections that are built into the law for people with preexisting conditions.

There is no CBO score on the latest House proposal because Republicans decided to ram the bill through without the ability of anyone to read the legislation. No one read that bill. Let's be honest. It was filed hours before it was voted on, and no one knows the cost of that bill because they didn't wait for a CBO score.

It is simply unbelievable that the House of Representatives decided to reorder one-fifth of the American economy without reading the proposal or without understanding its cost, but Republicans in the Senate are attempting to pass their own version of a repeal-and-replace bill. We await the results of these secret partisan meetings.

I think Democrats have been pretty clear that we would like to be in this conversation. We want to preserve what works in the Affordable Care Act, and there is a lot that works. A new report out just a couple of weeks ago shows an astonishing decrease in the number of people who face personal bankruptcy in this country. Why? Because half of personal bankruptcies in the United States of America, prior to the Affordable Care Act being passed, were due to medical debt. So the reason that less people than ever before are having to declare personal bankruptcy is because medical bills don't bankrupt them anymore because of the Affordable Care Act. Let me guarantee you, that number will spike back up if anything approximating the House bill passes.

We think there are good things in the Affordable Care Act. Our constituents agree. Polling now routinely tells you the majority of Americans want to keep the Affordable Care Act, not replace it, but we want to be part of a conversation in which we talk about keeping the things that work and addressing the parts of the healthcare system that don't work. Costs are still way too high. We would like more competition on these exchanges. So let's have a conversation about that.

As of today, Democrats are being shut out of the process. If you are represented by Democrats in the U.S. Senate, you have no voice in this process because Republicans have chosen to do it just amongst their own party. I think that is a shame. I understand in the end, Democrats passed a product in 2010 with Democratic votes, but anybody who was here remembers that there was a long process by which President Obama and Democrats in Congress tried to work with Republicans and brought the bill through the committee process. The HELP Committee and the Finance Committee had exhaustive meetings, hearings, and markups. In the end in the HELP Committee, upon which I sit today, there

were over 100 Republican amendments that were accepted and included in the piece of legislation that eventually passed on the floor of the Senate.

As far as we know, this secret process happening behind closed doors will include no Democrats now and will not go through a committee process. If they ever come up with something that can come up with 50 votes, it will be rushed to the Senate floor. That is outrageous. We want to be part of this process.

I am on the floor not to talk about what will happen if a bill robbing healthcare from millions of Americans, jeopardizing protections for people with preexisting conditions, comes to the floor of the Senate. I want to talk about what is happening right now because President Trump made it very clear, just a few days after he was sworn in, that his desire was to kill the aspects of the American healthcare system that are affected by the Affordable Care Act. By the way, that is almost the entirety of the American healthcare system because that bill did—in addition to extending coverage to 20 million Americans—grant protections from insurance abuse to hundreds of millions more.

A January 20 Executive order issued by the President said that “it is the policy of my Administration to seek the prompt repeal” of the law. It said:

To the maximum extent permitted by law, the Secretary of HHS and the heads of all other executive departments . . . shall exercise all authority available to them to waive, defer, grant exemptions from, or delay the implementation of any provision or requirement in the Act that would impose a fiscal burden on any State or a cost, fee, tax, penalty, or regulatory burden on individuals, families, healthcare providers.

President Trump made it clear that his motive from the start was to destroy the Affordable Care Act. My colleagues, he has consistently kept up that attack. I am often bringing President Trump's tweets to the floor because, well, they continue to exist on social media. It is nice to be reminded of the fact that, over the course of the first 100 days in office, President Trump has been routinely—routinely—attacking the American health care system, saying: ObamaCare will fall of its own weight; be careful—i.e., if you are thinking of signing up, be careful—discouraging people from signing up for these exchanges.

Once again, ObamaCare is dead, says the President of the United States, despite the fact that 19 million people rely on the exchanges for their healthcare coverage. Here is another one: ObamaCare will explode. Do not worry; he has it taken care of, he says. Finally, ObamaCare is in a death spiral.

So these are the routine, almost daily attacks, rhetorically, that this administration has waged against the Affordable Care Act. He has commanded his agencies to pick it apart in any way that they can. So, to the extent there is any diminution in the

health of these exchanges, to the extent that insurers are thinking about not participating or are pushing up their rates, there is only one reason for it. It is the active sabotage campaign that the Trump administration is engaged in to try to destroy the Affordable Care Act.

This is purposeful. This is intentional. This is planned. That Executive order, unlike some other Executive orders, was not just an exercise in political and public relations, because the next month, in February, the IRS announced that it would not reject tax forms from people who failed to answer the question of whether they had health insurance. So the IRS took a definitive step to undermine the Affordable Care Act by telling consumers they were not going to enforce the individual mandate.

Now, here is a news flash: Republicans think the individual mandate is a good idea. After attacking it for the last 6 years, the House bill they passed includes an individual mandate. It does. It is in a slightly different place. Instead of the penalty applying when you lose healthcare, in the House, all they did was just shift the penalty to when you sign up for healthcare again. All they did was move the mandate from when you lose healthcare to when you repurchase healthcare. But it is still there.

The administration is seeking to undermine the existing mandate. Insurance companies have noticed. Senator MCCONNELL came to the floor a week or so ago to take note of the pretty serious premium increases that were requested in Maryland, in part, by Blue Cross Blue Shield. But the head of Blue Cross Blue Shield in Maryland was very clear about why they were increasing rates.

He said the uncertainty around the individual mandate plays a significant role in the company's rate filing because failure to enforce the mandate makes it far more likely that healthier, younger individuals will drop coverage and drive up the costs for everyone else.

Insurance companies are noticing that the administration is picking apart the protections that can keep rates down in the exchanges and, thus, they are filing higher rates. But with less people in the exchanges than anticipated, insurance companies are also rethinking participation. This is intentional as well. Shortly after taking office, the HHS Secretary pulled the advertising for the Affordable Care Act in the last week of open enrollment. We know exactly what happened here because we have the data on who was signing up before Trump took office and after Trump took office.

Before Trump took office, open enrollment was exceeding open enrollment for the prior year. After that decision was made to pull funding for advertising, open enrollment cratered. The former marketing chief for healthcare.gov estimates that 480,000

people did not sign up for coverage in the last week because the ads were pulled and because the President of the United States was out there actively telling people that they should “be careful” before signing up for the exchanges because he was going to kill it.

So almost half a million Americans did not sign up for these exchanges. A half million Americans don't have health care today, potentially, because the Trump administration stopped advertising the exchanges and because the President of the United States told people, essentially, not to sign up.

Finally, let me talk about what is happening right now with respect to something called cost-sharing reduction payments. A big part of the Affordable Care Act—and really the foundation of the Affordable Care Act—is subsidies that are given to individuals, often passed straight through to insurance companies, in order to help folks who are lower income buy insurance.

Guess what. Republicans think this is a good idea too. I know that because we stole the idea from Republicans. This was initially a Heritage Foundation plan that was adopted by Mitt Romney in Massachusetts. It was the Republican alternative to the Clinton healthcare bill in 1993. So this idea of individuals getting subsidies is a Republican idea that Democrats stole.

Republicans included it in the House bill. The subsidies are lower, but they are still there. The subsidies come in two forms. One, there is a tax credit to individuals based upon their income, and, two, for lower income individuals there is a payment that goes to the insurance companies that mitigates the amount of money that you have to pay out of pocket—just two different kinds of subsidies.

These subsidies are relied upon by the insurance companies to continue to offer these products. The Trump administration is paying the subsidies but is trickling them out 1 month at a time, constantly making public pronouncements that question whether they will continue to make those payments.

Here is what OMB Director Mick Mulvaney told reporters. He said the administration could pull the plug on subsidies at any time. He said: We haven't made any decisions. The payments are due, I believe, the 20th or the 21st of every single month. We have not made any decisions at all on whether we will pay in May.

Think about if you are an insurance company executive deciding, A, whether to put a plan on an exchange or, B, if you put a plan on an exchange, how much to charge, and the White House is telling you: You may not get the subsidies that are called for under the law, and we may give you no warning in pulling those subsidies. We are going to pay them for May. We might not pay them for June. Maybe we will pay them for July and August. Maybe we will pull them for September.

How would you make a decision on how much to charge consumers? Why

would you enter into a contract with a State or Federal-based exchange? So whether it is the attack on the individual mandate, whether it is the decision to pull advertising, or whether it is the games being played with cost-sharing reduction payments, there is a coordinated effort inside the White House today to destroy the American healthcare system to the extent that much of the system has the Affordable Care Act at its foundation.

President Trump was pretty clear about this the day of the failure of the first healthcare bill in the House of Representatives. He essentially telegraphed that he was going to try to undermine the Affordable Care Act as punishment to Democrats, and that if he hurt enough people, eventually Democrats would come to the table and negotiate with him. Well, I have a message for the President of the United States: That is not how it is going to work. You are not going to blackmail Democrats by hurting our constituents by undermining the Affordable Care Act.

We want to be part of this discussion about improving the healthcare system. We do. We want to work with Republicans. It will be a much smaller and likely less revolutionary bill than Republicans are considering today, but it will have both party's fingerprints on it. We are not going to be part of a bill that strips healthcare away from tens of millions of Americans, and we cannot support this administration while it seeks to undermine the Affordable Care Act on a daily basis.

If these exchanges fail—I don't think they will, but if the exchanges fail—or if rates go up, there is only one place to put the blame—on an administration that is actively, regularly, and on a daily basis trying to sabotage the Affordable Care Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are not. We are on the Brand nomination.

THE INTERNET

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise today to point out that the Federal Communications Commission is voting today, perhaps this morning, to begin the process to roll back a regulatory framework that should never have been imposed on broadband service providers in the first place. Like many of my colleagues, I am glad the FCC is working to restore the "light touch" regulatory framework that has allowed the internet to thrive since its creation.

This action sets the stage for Congress to then put a legislative solution in place that strikes the right balance between providing regulatory oversight on the one hand and giving the broadband industry the flexibility it needs to innovate and expand on the other hand.

We should not rely on a classification that was devised during the depression

era. There should be 21st-century rules for 21st-century technology. As chairman of the Senate subcommittee that oversees internet issues, I look forward to the task ahead. Keeping the internet free and open is a goal shared by most of us and by many of my friends on the other side of the aisle. A bipartisan solution can help provide long-term certainty for both consumers and broadband providers.

This certainty will be essential to our efforts to close the digital divide and remove barriers to internet connectivity that exist in Mississippi and around the United States. The online experience we enjoy today and the revolutionary advances of the internet over the past quarter century did not happen because of the heavy hand of the Federal Government.

These advances happened because the Federal Government stayed out of the way, supporting a "light touch" regulatory framework where innovation, competition, and investment could truly survive and thrive.

This was the framework that existed under both Republican and Democratic administrations until 2015, when politics got in the way. With a party-line vote, the FCC that year decided to adopt a utility-style framework, as I said, resulting from legislation devised during the depression. It classified broadband service as a common carrier under title II of the Communications Act of 1934.

A utility-style framework for telephones may have worked during the Bell telephone monopoly of the depression era, but that does not mean it is a right fit now. Nor does it mean we should adopt a completely hands off regulatory approach, which I would also oppose. The goal of net neutrality, which is designed to prevent internet providers from prioritizing some legal content over others has not gone away. But we know that handing over broad control of the internet to Washington is also not the answer.

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai has outlined some of the reasons for this, including the impact of title II regulations on big and small internet service providers. If we do not give providers the confidence to invest in better services and better infrastructure, it could limit consumers' options and services. This could also affect our efforts to close the digital divide, to bring the digital world to our rural communities in Alabama and Mississippi. Underserved communities could remain underserved.

Without broadband access, these communities could lose out on critical jobs, economic development, and many other opportunities borne out of the thriving internet economy.

At the end of the day, we need to be asking: What do Americans want and what do Americans need? They need broadband that is accessible, affordable, fast, and reliable. They want to be able to choose the services and content that best meets their needs.

These are the priorities that need to be kept in mind as the FCC works today and as lawmakers work to strike a balance between regulatory oversight and free market productivity.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL CARSON

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

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, every week I have been coming to the Senate floor to talk about someone in my great State of Alaska who makes Alaska a better place for all of us—for the community, for everybody living there. I call this person our Alaskan of the Week. To be honest, it is one of the most fulfilling things I get to do as a Senator, recognizing back home and across the country special people in my State.

There is no doubt that many here in the Chamber and the people who are watching from home have seen pictures and television shows about Alaska. We are a little biased—I know one of our pages is an Alaskan—that we have the most beautiful State, not only in the country but in the world. So we want to encourage everybody watching to come visit Alaska. It will be the trip of a lifetime, absolutely guaranteed. It is truly the people of Alaska who make our State so special, people with big hearts who band together to solve challenges. Like all places, we have challenges.

This week I would like to recognize Michael Carson for his work to help people in Alaska who are struggling with addiction. We know this is a problem that is impacting every single State in our great Nation. Michael lives in Palmer, AK, a picturesque town about 45 miles from Anchorage in Alaska's vast Matanuska-Susitna Valley—what we just call the Valley or the Mat-Su. It is about the size of West Virginia, so don't get me going on the size of Alaska. It will embarrass most of my—actually all of my colleagues here, unfortunately for them. Palmer is flanked by the rolling Talkeetna Mountains to the north and the sawtoothed Chugach Mountains to the south. It is a close-knit community where most people know each other.

Many people in Palmer and the Mat-Su across the State know Michael Carson's name. Like many Alaskans, Michael's story is one full of adventure. Originally from California, he received his undergraduate in early childhood development from the University of Texas. After hitchhiking through Africa and spending a summer in Mexico, he took a job teaching in Nome, AK, in 1974. A few years later, he moved to the Mat-Su to teach and taught our students for many years.

He retired from teaching, but his yearning to help people, particularly our youth, did not leave him. He got a job at Covenant House in Anchorage, which is a homeless youth shelter. It is a wonderful place, by the way. I am a little biased on this one; my wife Julie happens to work at Covenant House. Michael's shift started at 8 p.m. and ended at 8 a.m. That is what he was doing at Covenant House. He spent those hours walking through the city, reaching out to kids on the streets, sharing his own story, and inspiring our youth because his story also involves recovery. It is a privilege to say here on the Senate floor that Mike has been sober for 29 years.

Eventually realizing that kids in the Mat-Su Valley also needed a place to go when they were in trouble and needed help, Michael and another incredible constituent of mine, Michelle Overstreet, founded MYHouse in Palmer, a place that provides services like job assistance, access to healthcare, clothing, food, and showers for homeless youth. Michael still sits on the board, still remains a champion for all youth, particularly those in recovery and the homeless or disadvantaged. He leads recovery groups on-site weekly, as well as meetings with clients who are struggling. He has also volunteered to host recovery groups at the Mat-Su youth detention facility for the past 13 years. Michael has helped many young people get sober and stay sober.

In Michelle Overstreet's words, it is not uncommon for youth to come into the drop-in center, homeless and just out of juvenile detention, and ask specifically for Michael, to come in and say that he helped them somewhere along their journey through life to sobriety, just to come in and say: Thank you, Michael.

Most of us know that our country is in the midst of an opioid crisis, one that has become an epidemic in many places across the country. In 2015, more people in America died from overdoses—over 52,000, and most were linked to opioids and heroin—than car crashes or gun violence.

On Wednesday morning, Alaskans awoke to a disturbing headline in the Alaska Dispatch News: "Anchorage is seeing a dramatic surge in heroin overdoses." Anchorage is the largest city in Alaska. It is my hometown. The article said that since May 1, there have been more than 2 overdoses a day in Anchorage—34 overdoses in just a little more than 2 weeks.

Like almost every State in this great Nation of ours, Alaska is being hit hard by the opioid crisis, and we are trying to focus as much attention as we can in a bipartisan fashion on addressing this crisis, whether in Alaska, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Indiana, or Vermont.

We need people like Michael. Every State does. He started the only grass-roots opioid task force in the State of Alaska and continues to chair that effort to this day. He knows too well how the abuse of opioids, other drugs, and

alcohol robs our citizens—but particularly our youth—of their lives, promise, and future. He also understands how very important it is to have resources for those who need the support and recovery. Those resources come in many forms. We have been trying in the Congress in the last year, year and a half, to bring significant resources to our State and local communities. We are doing that.

State support is also important across the country. Perhaps most important is the community support and having people like Michael on the frontlines who understand that addiction is not a moral failure and that people who are suffering need help. They need help, not moral judgments from us.

Because of Michael's involvement and the involvement of so many others in Alaska and particularly in the Mat-Su, there are places for people who are suffering to call and get help. There are places to go and heal and places where our youth can have leaders who listen to them, like Michael.

Michael says it is vital for his own recovery to continue to help people who are suffering from addiction. He calls it "survivor obligation." I call it the work of angels.

Michael, thanks for all you do, and congratulations on being our Alaskan of the week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from South Dakota.

THE INTERNET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the internet worked great in 2014 when there were no Federal net neutrality rules. Truth be told, even after the Obama-era Federal Communications Commission applied depression-era phone monopoly regulations to broadband in 2015, most Americans saw little or no difference in their internet experience. The internet still creates jobs, expands educational opportunities, keeps us in touch with loved ones, and, as a bonus, it is often entertaining.

This internet that we know and love isn't going to fall apart anytime soon, no matter what the FCC decides. But there are important policy questions that need to be answered about how the internet will grow and develop into the future. Let's put the apocalyptic rhetoric and fearmongering aside.

The internet doesn't belong just to Republicans, Democrats, big Silicon Valley tech companies, internet service providers, small Silicon Prairie startups, or the Federal Government. It belongs to everyone. It is global. It is best when it is free and open.

Today, as the FCC reconsiders the flawed broadband regulations it issued only 2 years ago, Congress should look back at the path that we could have taken but didn't. In November of 2014, I offered former FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler an opportunity for Democrats and Republicans to come together to craft a permanent legislative solution

banning controversial practices known as blocking, throttling, and paid prioritization of internet traffic. With colleagues in the House of Representatives, I even put forward a draft bill doing exactly that. It wasn't a final offer but, rather, an outreach to get the conversation started. I thought the time and opportunity to protect the open internet on a bipartisan basis had arrived. Through bipartisan legislation, I believed Congress should put into statute widely accepted principles of network management, commonly referred to as "net neutrality."

Our idea for legislation was straightforward: Combine protections ensuring that owners of broadband infrastructure can't use their role to manipulate the user experience with those guaranteeing a continuation of the light-touch regulatory policies that helped the internet thrive for two decades.

But Chairman Wheeler rejected our idea for bipartisan legislation. Instead, he and his staff lobbied to block such discussions from even happening in Congress. He then, with only partisan support, issued an order that gave the FCC authority to regulate the internet under old laws designed for phone monopolies and eliminated all the authority the Federal Trade Commission had to police broadband providers.

I represent South Dakota, a rural State that is home to small but still very innovative technology businesses. In other parts of the State, communities lack access to high-speed broadband. In the debate over the FCC regulating broadband with rules designed for phone monopolies, there were many concerns that Chairman Wheeler's approach would create uncertainty that chills investment.

"Chilling investment" is a term that one often hears about the business community. To me, what it really means is that many Americans in rural communities will have to wait longer before they have an opportunity to select high-speed internet service. Today there are 34 million Americans who lack access to broadband services at home.

As innovation on the internet thrives, demand for data rises, and the stock market hits all-time highs, one would have suspected that broadband investment would continue growing as it had for two decades. But according to one analysis, annual investment actually went down 5.5 percent in 2016 compared to 2014. This is a troubling sign that private investment may have second thoughts about the ability to turn capital expenditures into future profits under an excessive regulatory regime.

Chairman Wheeler assured the public that his FCC would not use new authority over the internet to aggressively restrict many regular online practices, but he could not offer assurances that, as years pass and administrations change, such regulatory restraint would remain. His order gives wide legal latitude for any future FCC

not bound by his commitments to touch any and every corner of the internet. After all, unless grounded in legislation, partisan policy changes through administrative action can be fleeting.

Today's action at the FCC aptly underscores the concern that the FCC's partisan approach to internet policy in 2015 did not put the internet on a solid foundation. I know there are many upset about what the FCC is doing. I felt much the same way 2 years ago when the FCC voted to proceed after my bipartisan outreach had been rejected.

We should not, however, view the FCC's action today as a final outcome. While I commend Chairman Ajit Pai and Commissioner Michael O'Rielly for taking this necessary step, I fully recognize that today's action alone does not create ideal certainty for the internet. There is more work yet to do.

In politics, it is rare to get a second chance at bipartisan compromise, yet right now we have an opportunity to accomplish what eluded us 2 years ago—clear and certain rules in statute to protect the open internet. We have another chance to sit down, to discuss every stakeholder's concerns, and to work toward the common goal of protecting the internet.

While the FCC's 2015 order may soon be consigned to the dustbin of history, the last few months have shown that political winds can and often do shift suddenly.

To my colleagues in both the majority and minority: The only way to truly provide legal and political certainty for open internet protections is for Congress to pass bipartisan legislation. We need a statute offering clear and enduring rules that balance innovation and investment throughout the entire internet ecosystem.

In crafting rules, we need to listen to the concerns of all Americans who support an open internet but who may have differing opinions about the greatest threats to online freedom. For some Americans, the greatest concern is meddling by internet service providers, and for others it is unelected bureaucrats attempting to overprotect Americans from products and services that they actually like.

Online innovation is a virtuous circle. Online companies need robust and widely available broadband networks to reach their customers, and ISPs need the online experience to be compelling enough to drive subscriber demand.

We need to work together collaboratively to find the right policies for the internet. I firmly believe we can find common ground to protect the internet, so long as we don't fixate on the misguided notion that monopoly regulation is the only way to preserve it. While some may wish to wait until the activities at the FCC and in the courts have completely run their course, my preference would be to begin bipartisan work on such legisla-

tion without any further delay. Innovation and job creation should no longer take a backseat to partisan point scoring.

It is time for Congress to finally settle this matter. I am happy to meet at any time with any of my colleagues who are serious about discussing a path forward. I would also welcome discussing any new open internet proposals from my colleagues that balance the need for both innovation and investment.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, after reviewing Rachel Brand's record and testimony during her confirmation hearing, I cannot support her nomination to become Associate Attorney General.

Ms. Brand is a fierce supporter of the so-called Patriot Act and the bulk collection of millions of Americans' data. Americans deserve an Associate Attorney General who can properly balance their Constitutionally protected right to privacy against national security interests. Ms. Brand has demonstrated her willingness to abridge those rights.

I am particularly disturbed by Ms. Brand's tenure as the Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Policy from 2005 to 2007. Ms. Brand worked at the Department at the time when Bradley Schlozman, a high-ranking official within the Department of Civil Rights, was accused of inappropriately politicizing the Department. Ms. Brand's emails during her time at the Department indicate that she may have been aware of and, indeed, a willing participant in this inappropriate activity. Conservative groups are now urging Attorney General Sessions to "wash out the progressive liberal activism that infects the agency from top to bottom." This Justice Department under Attorney General Sessions is already facing its own ethics crisis. When President Trump flouts protocols and procedures with impunity, I cannot in good conscience vote to allow Ms. Brand to return to the Department of Justice and continue where she left off.

Mr. THUNE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, we are still dealing with some of the same issues we have dealt with before. It is interesting to me the number of people who have asked: Is Congress obsessed right now with all of the press reports and all of the things that are happening around the Presidency and everything else? I have said to them that is one of the things on our list, but that is not what we are talking about

the most. We are working on issues like tax reform and healthcare issues and regulatory issues.

I just had three bills that went through the markup process just yesterday that deal with small business regulation and how we are going to be able to manage getting things back in order. We spent all day at lunch on Tuesday and we spent all day at lunch on Wednesday with our entire conference in a working lunch together and talked about healthcare policies. We are still working on trying to finish these issues that absolutely need to get done.

Healthcare is one of those issues that has been one of the prime conversations now for years, and we are in the final stretch of actually working through an actual repeal and replace of multiple sections of the Affordable Care Act that have caused the greatest amount of damage, but I still have people who will catch me and ask: Well, there are beneficial parts. What are you going to keep, and what is going to go, and why do we need to replace it?

I will typically smile at folks and say: Let me give you a quick recap as to why we need to replace this and what is really happening. It may be different in your State than it is in mine, but let me lay it out as to where we are and what has been said.

Remember, back in the earliest days, the Affordable Care Act being passed, it was all about premiums decreasing. In my State, premiums went up just last year—in 1 year—76 percent in the individual market. It was a 1-year increase of 76 percent. The year before, under the Affordable Care Act, they went up 35 percent in 1 year. Premiums not only have not stabilized, but they have accelerated out of control.

It was all about deductibles decreasing. Deductibles have also skyrocketed. It was about, if you like your doctor or if you like your healthcare, you can keep it. Doctors have moved to other hospitals. Doctors' offices have stopped being independent. They have to be able to work with other facilities so as to maintain the compliance requirements there. Most of the independent doctors in Oklahoma are no longer independent doctors. They now work under a corporate structure or they cannot survive.

As to this whole thing about competition on the open market, we used to have multiple companies in Oklahoma that provided insurance. We now have one. Every other company has left. There is one company left. There is no competition driving down prices. It is a monopoly. It is the same thing that is happening all over the country. Just this year, there are one-third of the counties in America that now only have one insurance provider. In my State, all 77 counties only have one insurance provider.

To tell you where things are really headed in this area of competition, United, which is one of the largest providers of healthcare, dropped out of all

of the exchanges nationwide—everything. It is doing none. In the past couple of days, Aetna announced it will no longer do competition in any State anywhere in the country. The number of companies even willing to try to live up to these regulations continues to drop off. That is what is really happening in our States.

If you want to know what that actually means to real families, let me give you a taste as to what comes into my office regularly because I have many people who call my office and say: Protect this. Protect this. Protect whatever it may be in the healthcare coverage. You have to make sure you guard it.

I will typically say to them: Let me introduce you to some other people who are also calling in and who are also writing in.

I will leave their names out, but let me give you just some of the situations:

A single mom, who has children and is from Norman, OK, contacted us and said her family has seen its premiums triple over the last 2 years. Currently, its premiums are \$1,500 a month, with a deductible for the family of \$24,000.

Another family contacted me who has a disabled child. The federally mandated health insurance under ObamaCare for 2016 was \$895. For 2017, it is \$1,553 a month for this family with a disabled child.

A husband and wife in Tulsa, OK, wrote me. Their current monthly expense for just insurance is \$1,500—twice the amount of their house payment. They have a relative who is working three part-time jobs and cannot get a full-time job because, under ObamaCare, a full-time job also requires all of the benefits. No one is hiring in that full-time area because of the additional requirements for ObamaCare. He is working three part-time jobs, and because he is working three part-time jobs and has no health insurance, he is also paying the penalty—fine—on his taxes for not having insurance. Not only can he not get a full-time job because of the ObamaCare requirements, but he is paying a penalty because of it as well.

A husband and wife from Newkirk, OK, wrote me. For their insurance alone, not including out-of-pocket medical expenses, the husband and wife will spend \$21,965 this year on healthcare coverage.

Another family wrote me from Stillwater, OK. Their healthcare coverage used to be 5 percent of their family income. Now their healthcare coverage is 22 percent of their family healthcare income.

I have another family who wrote to me, and it is very interesting. They are from Oklahoma City, and they wrote me and just gave me a breakout—a chart—that they had created. In 2015, their monthly premium had skyrocketed to \$1,400. In 2016, it was \$1,500. Now, in 2017, it is \$2,042 a month. Let that soak in for a moment.

Then they made the statement that there are financially strapped families who will not go to the doctor due to this out-of-pocket expense. That is the additional deductible that is on top of their \$2,000 premium. Individuals buying private insurance have no recourse because we have no other option that we are allowed to go to. There is only one insurance provider available to us. We need competition in this State in order to take away the financial burden on our families.

All they want are options. Yet right now what the Federal Government has told them is: No. We have a policy, and you have to buy that policy. If you do not buy the policy we pick for you, we will fine you on your taxes.

They are stuck. Thousands of Oklahomans are stuck.

Why is it such a big issue? Because of how it affects individuals. Why is it such a big issue? Because of what is still coming.

There is this false belief that the Affordable Care Act is fully implemented. That is not true. Many of the aspects of the most onerous parts of the Affordable Care Act did not go into implementation until after President Obama left office. Let me give you some examples of some things they had back-loaded that would not start until after he had left office:

There is the Cadillac tax. Every union family across the country will start to face much higher costs on their insurance because their insurance is considered too good under the Affordable Care Act. So all of those great union families who have great healthcare insurance across the country are about to start facing additional taxes and fees for their insurance being better than their next-door neighbors' insurance as the Affordable Care Act tried to push down healthcare insurance to be the same for everyone.

There are increased penalties that are still coming because the full penalties have not been rolled out yet on all of the taxes. They have gone up a little bit each year, but they will accelerate now over the next several years.

There are increased taxes. The medical device tax, which has been sitting out there, has been delayed, but it now will go into full implementation. There is also a tax, which is a health insurer tax, that adds an additional tax to every insurance company that of course they will then pass on to every single premium.

There are still all of the costs that are associated with the expansion of Medicaid. Now, there has been a lot of conversation about the expansion of Medicaid. As many people know, this was an expansion of Medicaid for people from 100 percent of poverty to 138 percent of poverty. It is just in that small bracket that there had been an expansion of Medicaid. Initially, the Federal Government covered all of the costs of that expansion. Then, starting this year, the States pick up the additional cost. My State, like several oth-

ers, chose not to do the expansion, and my State legislature and my Governor have taken a lot of heat for that. Yet what they said several years ago is, once the State has to pick up the additional bill, we will not be able to afford that expansion. We cannot do that.

Let me tell you what that would mean to my State. Because we did not expand, we do not have an additional cost this year, but let me give you a parallel. The State of Oregon is almost exactly the same size as the population in the State of Oklahoma. It will now start taking on an additional \$257 million a year in its State budget because of the expansion of Medicaid it took on.

Now, that may not seem like a big deal to some people in this Chamber, but in my State right now, our State legislature and our Governor are struggling to balance a budget, and we are going through all kinds of issues because, right now, our State is about \$800 million behind budget, and this is after being \$800 million behind budget last year. If the people in my State will imagine what is going on right now in the State capitol, if we had an additional \$257 million added to that hole, then that is what it would mean for our State.

There are real effects that are out there, and I understand healthcare is extremely personal. That is why it has always been something that has been decided by individual families, not by the Federal Government and, in my State, by someone 1,000 miles away who is trying to make healthcare decisions for them.

What we are really trying to do with this is to deal with the issues I just laid out. This is not about partisan politics. This is about people and families who have been hurt by what is happening in the Affordable Care Act—by someone 1,000 miles away who is trying to tell them what policies they can and cannot buy, by the skyrocketing costs, by the actual effect that has happened. While I have some people who say that is not real, I could line up the families in my State who used to have coverage but who no longer have coverage because they cannot afford it anymore.

Then there are the simplistic answers to, Why don't we just cover everybody in the country? Why don't we just do a single-payer system? People do not understand. They know how bad it has become now and how hard it has become now. You would accelerate that multi-fold if you were to just slip into a single-payer system.

What do we need to do? Let me give you a couple of quick thoughts. We are going to need transition time. Whatever you hear about all of the conversation we have about the Affordable Care Act or replacing the Affordable Care Act, please know that all of the conversations for us begin with how do we do a good transition from where we are now to where we need to be.

I have folks who say: Well, next week, this ends. Well, next year, this suddenly goes away.

No, there will have to be a transition process, and it will be over several years.

We are also still looking at some of the most basic elements. For instance, I have had folks say: I want to be able to keep my kids on my insurance until 26. That has been assumed, quite frankly, by the House and by the Senate, but the House bill that has been passed already keeps that. There has been a lot of conversation about preexisting conditions. Most of the conversation we have had as Senators, behind closed doors, is about taking care of people with preexisting conditions.

Those are very real issues.

We understand the dynamic of what happens back and forth with insurance companies and families and the struggles families have, whether they are cancer patients, diabetic, have rare blood diseases or Alzheimer's. There are so many struggles that are out there. We understand that. That is in our conversation as well. Yet we have to be able to find practical ways to start leveling out the cost of insurance. We cannot survive with rates skyrocketing like they are, and people need to know the safety net is going to actually be there.

We have to resolve these issues. We have to work for the benefit of our States, which cannot afford these overwhelming cost increases. We have to work for the benefit of families who are facing the issue and, quite frankly, for the Federal taxpayer as well.

While my State struggles with an \$800 million hole that it is facing right in the budget, by the end of our session, it will have had that resolved. It is constitutionally required to have that resolved. The Federal Government is facing a \$20 trillion budget hole right now—\$20 trillion. For all the folks who say: Just add more to it, it will be fine, may I remind you, there is a day all of that has to be paid. We have to be able to be responsible with our Federal budget at the same time we are helping our States to be able to manage theirs and at the same time we are helping our families to do the same.

No, this is not simple, but it has to be done. We have to be able to find a way to restore it. This is not about returning healthcare back to where we were years ago. That, quite frankly, is gone. As I mentioned before, all of those private doctors that used to function in my State, they don't function in my State anymore. They are all under corporate structures. The insurance companies have left or have merged. Hospitals in my State have merged because they couldn't survive the last few years of ObamaCare. Even if we wanted to go back to how healthcare was—and we don't—but even if we wanted to, we can't because there has been so much change in the last few years. We have to be able to actually fix where we are.

So I would encourage continued communication. Lots of folks have contacted my office on every side of this

issue. Keep doing that. Lots of folks in this Chamber have had dialogue, and though it looks like a partisan exercise, it is actually a pretty open conversation among our conference to try to figure out how we are going to actually help families, help our States, help our Federal budget, and help us to be sustainable on these critical issues.

I have gotten lots of other letters I can bring. There are lots of other stories out there. I think we know enough now to be able to know this is something that needs to be done. So while the Nation is distracted, we cannot be distracted. Let's finish the healthcare conversation. Lots of families are counting on us.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last night, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appointed Robert Mueller as special counsel to oversee the investigation into Russia's alleged meddling in the election last fall and any related misconduct. Robert Mueller is perhaps the single-most qualified individual to lead such an investigation, in my view, and he is certainly independent.

As a former FBI Director—the longest serving FBI Director since J. Edgar Hoover—he, by any measure, has the experience and the credibility and the credentials to conduct a nonpartisan investigation and come to a conclusion based on the facts alone. We could use some conclusions based on facts here in Washington, with the relentless torrent of rumor, gossip, and suspicion but very few facts. It is clear to me that Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein felt this was in the best interests of the Department of Justice and the country, and I trust his judgment on the matter.

I do think there is a related concern now that a special counsel has been chosen; that is, the proliferation of hearings and contact with witnesses and the principals over this Russia matter that while certainly legitimate in terms of doing oversight, which is our responsibility as the legislative branch, we can't—and shouldn't—intrude or perhaps undermine inadvertently the investigation being conducted by the executive branch and the special counsel. I think this is something we should talk about as a Senate because I know each committee that has some jurisdictional hook on this issue wants, of course, to do its job, but I think, if we don't deconflict between committees, as well as between the role of the Justice Department and the special counsel, we could risk inadvertently harming the investigation. I

trust no one would want to do that intentionally.

Sometimes, having served myself—as has the distinguished Presiding Officer as the former attorney general of Alaska—it is interesting, this is my first legislative role in government. I have been here for a while now, and I am starting to get the hang of things, but the fact is, sometimes I think legislators are confused about their role when it comes to investigations. They are not the FBI. Legislators are not the Department of Justice. They can't investigate a counterintelligence matter or a criminal matter. That is simply within the exclusive purview of the executive branch.

What we can do and what we must do, in my view, is to continue to conduct a bipartisan oversight investigation into these matters for our own purposes, which are legislative purposes, not executive branch or prosecutorial purposes. Now that Director Mueller has been appointed as special counsel and will be doing that on behalf of the Department of Justice and the executive branch, I think it is really important for us to again consider whether this proliferation of hearings and running down every rabbit trail that happens to pop up is really in the best interests of getting to the bottom of this matter.

I believe it is our duty—and this would be the case no matter who was in the White House—to get the facts and to conduct our legitimate oversight investigation here but in a way that cooperates with or certainly at least coordinates and deconflicts with the Department of Justice's investigation under the auspices of Director Mueller. In the meantime, I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Senate Intelligence Committee on a broad bipartisan basis to conduct the kind of investigation that is entirely appropriate so we can get to the bottom of this matter. The American people, of course, deserve nothing less.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. President, on another matter, the Senate continues to work toward repealing and replacing ObamaCare, unfortunately, without any help whatsoever from our Democratic colleagues, even though they know ObamaCare is failing the millions of people who buy their insurance in the individual market. Premiums are skyrocketing because of adverse selection and deductibles are so high they are effectively denied the benefit of having insurance in the first place. One would think an elected Senator representing those constituents would care enough about it to try to do something about it, but our Democratic colleagues, because they are so tied to ObamaCare and they feel like they have to defend it at all costs, I think it has blinded them to the failings of ObamaCare, certainly in the individual market. There ought to be some basis for us to work together in the best interests of all our constituents and the entire country.

Some of our colleagues have said: Well, we would be revisiting ObamaCare even if Hillary Clinton had been elected, and that is absolutely true because ObamaCare is failing millions of Americans, and it is our responsibility, on a bipartisan basis, to do something about it. So far, the politics of the day seem to be carrying our Democratic colleagues along with it. I hope at some time the fever breaks and they will see fit to do their duty, as we are attempting to do our duty, which is to replace ObamaCare with affordable healthcare that preserves individual choices and doesn't continue to exacerbate and aggravate the national debt and our financial status in the country.

ObamaCare, we now know, was oversold. At the time, the President said: If you like your policy, you can keep your policy; if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor; and, oh, by the way, a family of four will see a reduction in their premiums of \$2,500 a year. None of those claims proved to be true.

Again, the Presiding Officer was a former attorney general, as I was in my State, and we had a Consumer Protection Division. When people misrepresented the services or product they sold, we sued them. We went after them for consumer fraud. ObamaCare, to me, is one of the largest cases of consumer fraud I have ever seen, and people deserve better.

It is time to do away with this government-mandated, top-down approach that doesn't work. It is time to provide the American people with more affordable options. That is what we are trying to do. One would think that would be something all of us would want to do.

ObamaCare has taken a heavy toll on folks in my State. It is estimated that more than one-third of our counties are down to just one health insurance provider this year, and the ones that are there are saying that unless something changes, they are going to see double-digit increases in premiums for 2018. They are down to one provider because everybody else has decided they have lost enough money and they want to get out while they can. To have one provider is not about more options and choices and better coverage, it is an unworkable path forward for our Nation's healthcare needs.

Fortunately, every member of the Republican conference is now working together to do away with this unworkable healthcare plan and replace it with healthcare that helps American families get the coverage they need at a price they can afford. Why wouldn't we all be interested in providing the healthcare they need at a price they can afford?

The House has taken the first critical step, and I know my colleagues and I are eager to do our part. Since the Democrats refuse to lift a finger, we are going to have to do this with 52 Republicans, and it is not easy, but just because it is hard is no excuse for not

succeeding. We must succeed in the best interests of our constituents.

This isn't just a matter of taking something that is OK and making it better; this is taking something that is failing and, if we fail to act, will continue to drag Americans by the millions down with it.

It is important to understand the trials that Americans have faced under ObamaCare so we can move forward in a direction that supports families across the country. One of my constituents wrote me recently and told me that his premiums were going up by about 50 percent. To make matters worse, his doctors wouldn't accept patients on ObamaCare plans. That is a theme we have seen across the country: healthcare options dwindling while prices keep getting higher. The cost of his healthcare keeps going up, and his salary isn't going up at the same rate. He is losing disposable income, even though he has a job. So he is literally poorer as a result of ObamaCare. This isn't helping him, this is hurting him, and all because his monthly payment for health insurance is climbing. So he is living from paycheck to paycheck, and of course he is worried about the future, which is the reason he contacted me.

Unfortunately, this gentleman is representative of the unintended consequences brought about by ObamaCare. All of our offices get a lot of calls, a lot of emails and letters just like his. He is not on the exchanges because he wants to keep his doctors, and he is employed with employer-provided health insurance. To many in America, this would be a huge blessing, but unfortunately ObamaCare did nothing to help people like him. His premiums are going up so high, he is concerned about being able to put food on the table for his family. What a tragedy. What a disaster. This is truly a manmade disaster, and it is a crystal clear example of just how flawed ObamaCare really is.

This constituent of mine ended his letter to me by calling on Congress to fully repeal ObamaCare, and that is exactly what we will do. He is not alone in calling for change. Many Texans have been writing and calling in, and have been for some time, to tell me their ObamaCare story. It is making their lives harder, as I mentioned, with skyrocketing premiums, higher deductibles, and fewer choices of doctors and healthcare providers. These are the folks I was sent here to represent and whom I am fighting for, and each of us, I know, is doing their part—at least on this side of the aisle—to fight for our constituents who are being hurt by the status quo.

The status quo is not acceptable. I know it is not acceptable to our colleagues across the aisle, but they are so frozen in place by their own politics that they can't even step across the aisle and work with us in areas where we might agree. I hope this happens at some point, but it is not happening right now.

So we are going to repeal and replace ObamaCare and come up with the very best healthcare plan that we can—again, one that preserves choices, brings premiums down, and makes it more affordable.

Here is the final reason why we need to do this: We promised. We promised. In the last elections, we promised. There is a reason why, when ObamaCare passed, there were 60 Democrats and today there are 48. It is because in every intervening election we have made the perils of ObamaCare an issue, and in every election our friends across the aisle have lost Senators because they simply can't defend the status quo.

But beyond elections, I believe there is a time to engage in electioneering and there is a time to govern, and now is the time for us to govern responsibly. But it does have political benefits, too, because if people think you are doing a good job and if people think you care about them, then, they are likely to reward you politically. But that is not the main reason we should do it. We should do it because it is the right thing to do and because people are hurting and people are anxious and concerned about their future, living paycheck to paycheck, with ObamaCare taking a bigger and bigger bite out of their ability to provide for their family.

So we are going to get this done. Just because it is not easy isn't an excuse for not doing it. We can't complain that it is too hard because that is what we asked our constituents to send us here to do—to do the hard stuff, not the easy stuff—to do the hard stuff. This is hard, but it is not impossible. It is imminently doable. But it takes political will and commitment not just to keep our promise but, then, to do the dead-level best of our abilities to come up with a plan that actually believes not in more government control but in more individual control over your healthcare choices and to bring competition back into the marketplace, to let the market set rates and quality rather than the government determining this from Washington, DC.

One thing I truly believe is that competition makes things better for consumers. It brings down prices and it improves service because in a competitive environment where people have choices, they are going to go to the choice which serves their interests the best. They are going to reward the people who are doing the best job of delivering what they need and what they want at the price they can afford. It has a way of regulating the insurance market better than anything Washington, DC, could do—particularly by command and control of programs like ObamaCare.

So we are going to get it done, and we are all working together. We would continue to invite our colleagues across the aisle not to sit on their hands, not to do nothing but to do what they can, working with us in a

nonpartisan or bipartisan way to help save the people who are currently being damaged and hurt by the failures of ObamaCare but then to help us build something better, something more durable than what we have seen with ObamaCare.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Brand nomination?

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 131 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Cochran	Inhofe	Scott
Collins	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johnson	Strange
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Young
Ernst	Murkowski	
Fischer	Paul	

NAYS—46

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Harris	Reed
Blumenthal	Hassan	Sanders
Booker	Heinrich	Schatz
Brown	Heitkamp	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Manchin	Udall
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	McCaskey	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Duckworth	Merkley	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murphy	Wyden
Feinstein	Murray	
Franken	Nelson	

NOT VOTING—2

Hirono Kaine

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.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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 nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

Mitch McConnell, Jeff Flake, Bob Corker, Roger F. Wicker, Cory Gardner, Marco Rubio, John Boozman, Pat Roberts, Joni Ernst, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Rob Portman, John Thune, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, John Cornyn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 86, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 132 Ex.]

YEAS—86

Alexander	Franken	Murray
Barrasso	Gardner	Nelson
Bennet	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Perdue
Boozman	Hassan	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Reed
Cantwell	Heinrich	Risch
Capito	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cardin	Heller	Rounds
Carper	Hoeven	Rubio
Casey	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Schatz
Cochran	Johnson	Scott
Collins	Kennedy	Shaheen
Coons	King	Shelby
Corker	Klobuchar	Strange
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Tester
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Manchin	Tillis
Cruz	Markey	Toomey
Daines	McCain	Udall
Donnelly	McCaskey	Van Hollen
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden
Fischer	Murkowski	Young
Flake	Murphy	

NAYS—12

Baldwin	Duckworth	Sanders
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Schumer
Booker	Harris	Stabenow
Brown	Peters	Warren

NOT VOTING—2

Hirono Kaine

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 12.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the following nominations en bloc, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Todd Philip Haskell, of Florida, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Congo and Tulinabo Salama Mushingi, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Senegal, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Haskell and Mushingi nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made laid upon the table en bloc and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1185 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Thank you, Mr. President.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

I rise today to once again speak out against the administration's proposal

to revive Yucca Mountain. I know I have said it before, and I will say it again: Yucca Mountain is dead. Nevada will not be our Nation's nuclear waste dump.

I conveyed that message in my meeting with Secretary Perry during his confirmation and reiterated it ahead of his visit to Yucca in March. My former colleague, Senator Harry Reid, was a powerful and outspoken opponent of Yucca and worked hard to make sure the project did not see the light of day. Now I am standing between this administration and Yucca. I say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that I will be leading this fight.

This is a reckless proposal. Over the last 30 years, the Federal Government wasted billions of taxpayer dollars to design and permit Yucca Mountain, all without any signal that Nevada would consent to it. A State without a single nuclear power plant should not have to shoulder the entire Nation's nuclear waste burden. We will not be run over by the desires of other States that want to move the nuclear waste that they produce, that they create out of their own backyards and then put it into ours.

I will say it again: Nevada will not be our Nation's nuclear waste dump.

Last week's accident at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington State serves as a chilling reminder of what Nevada could have to deal with at Yucca Mountain. I was relieved that no one was harmed after the tunnel collapsed but believe it serves as a wake-up call to my colleagues.

We need to find a viable solution to our Nation's nuclear waste problem. In addition to the potential tragic loss of life, radiation exposure resulting from a similar event at Yucca Mountain could shatter Nevada's economy. This is not to mention the threat of transportation accidents along the proposed waste transportation routes.

What this means is that under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, we are looking at shipping 9,495 rail casks in 2,800 trains, and 2,650 trucks hauling one case each to Yucca Mountain over the next 50 years. If the capacity limit at Yucca is more than doubled as has been discussed with the Department of Energy, we would shift 21,909 rail casks in about 6,700 trains and 5,025 truck casks to Yucca Mountain.

So I ask my colleagues: Do you really believe that over the span of the next 50 years there will not be a single transportation accident with an ensuing radiological release?

Under the DOE's proposal, these shipments would use 22,000 miles of railroads, 7,000 miles of highways crossing over 44 States and the Tribal lands of at least 30 Native American Tribes, the District of Columbia, and 960 counties with a population of about 175 million people.

Between 10 and 12 million people live within the radiological region of influence for route shipments; that is, within one-half mile of these rail and high-

way routes. In effect, these rail and highway routes would impact most of the Nation's congressional districts, estimated at 330 districts.

For those who are not familiar with the West or Nevada, access to rail corridors or highways is often difficult because they are in such remote locations. If there were a spill or an accident, questions remain within the Department of Energy regarding their response time for emergency radiological exposure. This is not to mention the issue of private ownership of rail rights-of-way, making it uncertain who would even control accident sites.

What we do know is that the local communities would be the ones forced to suffer any type of long-term effects of radiation exposure. This is in a State that was home to our Nation's nuclear test site and the surrounding communities, which have suffered for years from resulting exposure.

I ask my colleagues: Should Nevada be forced to once more to shoulder this burden?

Secretary Perry, in response to last week's accident, acknowledged our Nation's problem with nuclear waste, saying that the nation could no longer kick the can down the road.

I do not believe that our Nation should continue to kick the can—or in this case the cask—down the road. We must find a long-term viable solution to our Nation's nuclear waste problem, one that is rooted in a consent-based siting.

I stand ready to work with my colleagues to make sure States have a voice in this process. Failure to do so will serve only to make this problem worse, risking future accidents similar to what we saw last week.

We can no longer afford to look backward at the failed proposals of the past and waste even more taxpayer dollars. Instead, we need to move forward on a real solution to a very real problem.

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

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

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the most important words in our Constitution are the first three words "We the People," written in beautiful script and written many times larger than the rest of the document so that even if you are across the room, you know what this Constitution stands for—not a government by and for the powerful, not a government by and for the privileged, but as President Lincoln so eloquently said in his Gettysburg Address, a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

As a "we the people" nation, we adhere to a core set of principles that

have guided us through good times as well as in dark moments. One of those key principles is the rule of law, that we are a nation in which not only is there the rule of law but in which no one is above the law.

If we walked out of this Chamber right now, proceeded through the double doorways, and down the steps of the Capitol, we would be staring at the beautiful building of the Supreme Court. The entire building symbolizes the role of justice in our society. As you look at that magnificent Supreme Court—the broad, marble steps leading up to the door—you see these simple words inscribed above: "Equal justice under the law." It is right there. You can almost see it from where I am standing now: "Equal justice under the law." That is the principle that is part of the ethic of every courthouse in America—from the smallest, most rural courthouse to the big city courthouse square. We see those same principles personified as Lady Justice. There she is, holding the scales, blindfolded so as to make sure everyone is treated equally.

Yet, over the past few months, we have been in a period in which we have been staring into the abyss of a constitutional crisis because this very core principle of "no one is above the law" and "equal justice under the law" has been under assault.

We have a President whose campaign team is under investigation because of substantial information that suggests the possibility of coordination and collaboration with Russia to change the outcome of the Presidential election—an assault on one of the most fundamental premises of a free society; that of free and equal elections.

We have a President who gave code-word classified information to an adversary—Russia—just a few days ago. We have confidential information, we have secret information, and we have code-word information at the very top. These are the most sensitive secrets of the American Government, and our President gave that information to Russia. If anyone else did that, he would be facing criminal charges.

We have a President who sought to shut down an investigation into one of his former team members—retired LTG Michael Flynn. We know Lieutenant General Flynn was in contact with Russian officials, and he was fired for lying about it. President Trump fired the head of the FBI because he would not drop the investigation into General Flynn's Russian connections and conduct.

We have a President, President Trump, who asked his Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General to develop a cover story to tell the American people the reason he fired the Director of the FBI, which is that he was upset about the Director of the FBI's treatment of his former Presidential opponent, Hillary Clinton.

If anyone believes the President woke up in the middle of the night and

decided to fire the Director of the FBI because he was concerned about the way Hillary Clinton was treated, then you have not been paying attention this last year and a half.

Now, if in the course of an investigation it is found that members of the Trump campaign coordinated or collaborated with the Russians to undermine the integrity of our elections, then that is treasonous conduct. If the President asked for, encouraged, or knew about such activity, then he would be party to such treasonous conduct. If the President used his office to attempt to shut down either the investigation of Michael Flynn or the investigation into the collaboration between the Trump campaign and the Russians, then that obstruction is potentially a serious crime of obstruction of justice, and it has to be fully pursued. If the President fired his former FBI Director in order to slow down or shut down these investigations, then that compiles the evidence of obstruction of justice.

These sets of facts point to serious misconduct. We have to fully investigate whether there was, in fact, such misconduct. That is why, for more than 3 months—going back to February 15 and Michael Flynn's resignation—I have been calling for a special prosecutor to conduct a thorough, impartial investigation into these matters. Over these 3 months, the case for why we need an independent special prosecutor has only grown stronger with each new event, each new story, each new piece of evidence.

If there were any lingering doubt about the need for a special prosecutor, that doubt was washed away last week when President Trump fired Director Comey for pursuing the investigation into the ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. That is why many of my colleagues and countless Americans all across the country stood up and demanded that no nominee fill Director Comey's shoes unless a special prosecutor had been appointed. So I was very pleased when last night Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein appointed such a special prosecutor.

Now, he will be coming to this Chamber to speak with us in a short period of time, later this afternoon. But whatever else transpired, stepping up and appointing that special prosecutor was the right thing to do. He announced the appointment of former FBI Director Robert Mueller as special counsel—the words “special counsel” and “special prosecutor” are largely interchangeable—with wide-ranging authority to conduct a thorough and independent investigation into “any links and/or coordination between the Russian government and individuals associated with the campaign of President Donald Trump; and, any matters that arose or may arise from the investigation; and, any other matters within the scope of the investigation.”

Last night's announcement was a tremendous victory for justice—the

principle of justice. It was a tremendous victory for a country with the rule of law. It was a tremendous victory for the principle that no individual is above the law in the United States of America.

We need to have confidence that there will be a robust investigation to get to the truth, no matter where that leads us. Certainly, our confidence has been improved by the appointment of the special prosecutor last night—and not just any individual, but an individual qualified and respected to lead such an investigation.

For 12 years, from just before the September 11, 2001, attacks and right through 2013, this man, Robert Mueller, led the FBI. He led it for the second longest period in U.S. history. He led it for 2 years more than the standard term for the head of the FBI. He is known as a thorough, by-the-book prosecutor who can't be influenced or intimidated, and I have every faith that he will conduct a professional, robust, and thorough investigation and give the American people the answers to all of these issues.

But as we applaud this strong movement toward justice, to truth, and to accountability, this strong stride in support of our “we the people” democratic Republic, we cannot rest. We need to make sure that Mr. Mueller, as a special prosecutor, gets every resource he needs to aggressively pursue justice and the complete independence he needs to undertake this incredibly important task.

At the same time, we have to keep pressing here in the Senate, encouraging our Intelligence Committee, as well as the House Intelligence Committee, to aggressively pursue information. We cannot cede our obligation to represent and fight for the best interests of the American people or for our “we the people” Nation, and that includes speaking truth to power and holding our leaders accountable for their actions.

Mr. Mueller will have, as I noted, wide-ranging authority to conduct his investigation. His investigation and the investigation here in the Senate by the Senate Intelligence Committee will be looking at a number of connections that have occurred over the course of this last year and a half.

Now, we know a lot about what the Russians did to hack the American Presidential election. The intelligence community told us in a report this past January that, with “high confidence” Russian President Vladimir Putin “ordered and influenced the campaign in 2016 aimed at the U.S. presidential election” and that he did so in order to “undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate [Hillary] Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency.”

The report goes on to say that the Russian Government “aspired to help President-elect Trump's election chances when possible by discrediting Secretary Clinton and publicly contrasting her unfavorably to him.”

We know many of the elements of this aggressive Russian campaign. They used the resource “Russia Today” to spread fake news stories, to develop those stories, and to publicize those stories. They hired thousands of internet trolls to comment in social media on the affairs in America, as if they were Americans weighing in. They proceeded to hack the DNC, or the Democratic National Committee, files and the Clinton campaign files, and they released damaging documents from those hacks. They used bots; that is, remote computers instructed by code that was placed onto those computers to weigh in on social media as if they were people weighing in. So we had thousands of machines weighing in with comments as if they were individuals weighing in. Why did they do that? To take the fake news story and proceed to amplify it with comments from thousands of trolls and, probably, tens of thousands of bots, in order to get those issues trending so they would appear in the everyday news that Americans see. We are talking about a massive campaign of interference in the Presidential election.

What we need to know is whether anyone on the Trump campaign was connected, in any possible way, to these activities. To find that out, we have to investigate the growing web of connections between members of the Trump campaign and Russia.

Just consider some of the connections that have been explored already in the press. One individual is Carter Page, who served as President Trump's foreign policy adviser on the campaign trail. Mr. Page lived in Russia for 3 years while working for Merrill Lynch. He participated in several deals during his time there with Gazprom, the Kremlin-owned energy giant whose chairman was Vladimir Putin's deputy while Prime Minister.

He became friendly and emailed back and forth for months with Victor Podobnyy, a Russian spy who was recorded on tape saying he was trying to recruit Page.

Last year, while employed as a member of the Trump campaign, Mr. Page traveled to Moscow to deliver a speech bashing U.S. policy toward Russia, saying: “Washington and other Western powers have impeded potential progress through their often hypocritical focus on ideas such as democratization, inequality, corruption and regime change.”

Then there is Paul Manafort, the former chairman of the President's campaign. He was hired to manage the Republican Convention and to wrangle delegates, but he was promoted to campaign chairman and chief strategist, until he resigned because of his questionable foreign dealings.

From 2004 until 2014, Manafort worked as an adviser to the Ukrainian President, Viktor Yanukovich, a pro-Russian strongman who, over the years, adopted policies that moved his country away from the European

Union and closer to Russia. Manafort is regularly credited with helping Yanukovych win the Presidency in 2010.

In 2014, a revolution rose up against Yanukovych, and he was ousted from power. He now lives in exile in Russia. But Mr. Manafort continued working in Ukraine, helping rebrand the former President's Party of Regions as an opposition party, mostly from eastern Ukraine, which advocates for stronger relations with Russia.

Then, we have Roger Stone, President Trump's longtime ally, friend, and adviser since they first met back in 1979. That is three-plus decades. Ironically, it was Mr. Stone who introduced Donald Trump to former President Richard Nixon back in the 1980s, and there are stories in the media that Mr. Stone pressured the President to fire Director Comey.

Over the years, Mr. Stone has appeared many times in *Russia Today*, the Kremlin's English language news network that developed and publicized fake news stories during last year's Presidential election.

In his appearances, Mr. Stone regularly criticized the U.S. intelligence community, he attacked our media, he attacked our free press, he praised Russia and its policies, and he even praised WikiLeaks—the organization responsible for releasing massive amounts of confidential and damaging documents about our Nation's intelligence services and capabilities.

More than that, Mr. Stone has bragged about his communications with hackers—hackers like Guccifer 2.0. And who is Guccifer 2.0? The individual responsible for hacking the DNC and releasing emails during the campaign.

Another person whose connections to both the Trump campaign and Russia will be looked at is our former colleague and now our Attorney General. During the course of his confirmation hearings, Mr. Sessions misled fellow Senators about his interactions with Russian officials. When asked what he would do as Attorney General if he learned that anyone connected with the Trump campaign had communicated with the Russian Government, he said:

I'm not aware of any of those activities . . . I have been called a surrogate at a time or two in that campaign and I did not have communications with the Russians.

But he did have communications, meeting with Russian Ambassador Kislyak on two separate occasions last year.

Then, we have Michael Flynn, a very major part of the connections between the Trump campaign and Russia—a retired lieutenant general and appointed to be National Security Advisor by President Trump. He was intimately involved in the series of events that led us to yesterday, with the appointment of a special prosecutor.

Beginning in February 2016, General Flynn served as an adviser to the

Trump campaign, and he was even considered as a potential running mate for President Trump. As we know, he followed President Trump into the White House as National Security Advisor. But as I noted before, that role was short-lived, as his Russian connections came to light.

Back in 2015, he was paid to attend a 10th anniversary gala for Russian TV and sat at a table with Mr. Putin. He didn't disclose this on his security forms.

During the Trump administration's transition, he talked with Ambassador Kislyak by phone, including one call on the very day that President Obama ordered sanctions against Russia as punishment. Punishment for what? Punishment for interfering with the American election.

When that information was discovered, the White House contended that General Flynn's conversations with the Russian Ambassador were nothing more than ironing out logistics for an eventual call between the President and Vladimir Putin.

Even Vice President PENCE went on the record defending Flynn, telling CBS News that the two "did not discuss anything having to do with the United States' decision to expel diplomats or impose censure against Russia."

But General Flynn's conversation with the Ambassador was picked up during routine surveillance of the Russian Ambassador. And what were they discussing? They were discussing the sanctions President Obama was placing on Russia. Why did he place those sanctions? Because of Russian interference in the election.

Acting Attorney General Sally Yates made it known that she warned the White House that Flynn was lying to the Vice President and that he was compromised. She met twice with Dan McGahn, the White House Counsel, to warn him about Flynn. But in exchange for making sure the White House knew about the fact that the National Security Advisor was compromised and then lied to the Vice President, she was fired—fired by the President.

Eighteen days after Sally Yates' warning, Michael Flynn resigned, after the Washington Post revealed that he had, in fact, discussed sanctions with Ambassador Kislyak.

Now, according to his lawyer, "General Flynn certainly has a story to tell, and he very much wants to tell it."

Well, I hope, as the Senate Intelligence Committee and as the special prosecutor pursue the investigations, that he will have every chance to tell it and will tell it with a fullness and an accuracy that will be complete.

That is the web of visible connections we already know about, and they suggest the possibility of coordination, consultation, and collaboration with the Russians to influence the American elections. We have to get to the bottom of whether, in fact, that is the case.

Did it go beyond a series of conversations to actual coordination, consultation, and collaboration? This is what we need to know.

Now, the President says that there is no "there," there. That is why we need an investigation, in order to find out. The President has called this a witch hunt. An investigation, I would convey to President Trump, is not a witch hunt. An investigation is pursuit of the truth. An investigation is in the highest tradition of equal justice for all.

A very large development, as we all now know, occurred last week with the firing of FBI Director James Comey, who was leading the Bureau's investigation into these matters. Director Comey confirmed while testifying in the House on March 20 that the FBI was, in fact, conducting an investigation into Trump's campaign—something we now know really bothered the President. But at the outset, the President's White House claimed that Comey's firing was about the Director's handling of the Clinton email investigations, not because of the Russia investigation. That story on its face caused eyebrows to raise across the country. Did people really believe the President woke up and was determined to right a wrong because the FBI Director had unfairly treated Hillary Clinton? Yet he asked his team to develop this story to share it with the American people. He asked his team—his Attorney General and his Deputy Attorney General—to essentially put out a story to mislead the American people. That in itself deeply damages the integrity of the White House.

This cover story also claimed that Comey was fired because he lost the trust of the rank-and-file FBI agents. Acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe came to the Hill to testify before the Intelligence Committee last week, and he conveyed that this is simply not true.

The cover story also involved Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein being the instigator of the firing by preparing this memo on his own and recommending it to the President. That also turned out to be a part of the deception, and the President himself made that clear, taking responsibility that it was his decision to fire, not a decision based on a recommendation that came from Rosenstein.

In an NBC News interview with Lester Holt, President Trump admitted that he "was going to fire regardless of recommendation" and that he was thinking of "this Russia thing," as he called it—"this Russia thing"—when he finally decided to fire the Director. He also told Lester Holt that he had asked Director Comey three times whether he himself was under investigation. The President admitted on camera to the American people that he fired the man in charge of the investigation against his campaign because he was frustrated that the investigation was still going on.

The American people received reports subsequently that the President

had asked Director Comey to pledge his loyalty to the President. This is news report of the memo that Director Comey wrote after meeting with the President. We find that the FBI Director is not going to be loyal to anyone but Lady Justice.

The President had the audacity to publicly threaten Director Comey after firing him. “James Comey,” said the President, “better hope there are no ‘tapes’ of our conversations before he starts leaking to the press!”

Attempting to intimidate future statements and possible statements in an investigation after a person has been fired is another factor that is totally inappropriate. Everyone with any shred of common sense knows such intimidation is inappropriate, but in the context of a criminal investigation, it may be more than inappropriate.

We don’t know if there actually were tapes. Our Intelligence Committee has requested the memos Director Comey wrote on his various conversations with the President. Remember, this is an experienced, seasoned FBI agent-turned-Director who has spent his life documenting conversations. It is considered to be a high level of integrity when such information is recorded in this fashion. Those memos carry a lot of weight. Some are classified, some are unclassified. They need to be provided immediately to the Senate Intelligence Committee, and if they aren’t provided, then the Intelligence Committee needs to subpoena them and needs to subpoena the tapes. If they exist, they need to be delivered. If they are not tapes but they are transcripts, they need to be delivered. If they are not tapes but a thumb drive or they exist on a piece of hardware, they need to be delivered, and our special prosecutor, Mr. Mueller, needs to have them as well.

I think that as one steps back from this incredible amount of information—the information about how Russia hacked the campaign, not just hacking into the DNC and Hillary Clinton’s campaign but then releasing that information in strategic moments; hiring a thousand individuals to comment in social media as if they were American citizens; establishing a botnet of computers to weigh in as if they were people to amplify this false social media, to get it trending and to get it into the mainstream news—when we consider all of this, we know how terribly wrong it was, and we have to learn every piece about what went on in order to make sure we are in the best prepared way to stop it from ever happening again.

We need to make sure we are in the best possible place to ensure that we can assist other democratic republics in making sure they are not victims of the Russians. We need to make sure that if any American, no matter who he or she is, collaborated or coordinated with the Russians in this effort to hack our campaigns, that they are prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, our law enforcement officers and the families who support them give so much in service to our communities. As we were tragically reminded again last week—and this happens in far too many places, in far too many States—some make the ultimate sacrifice to keep us safe.

Last Friday in Kirkersville, OH, Police Chief Steve DiSario responded to a report of a man with a gun at a nursing home. Chief DiSario did what so many first responders do when most of us in the public run away from danger: He ran toward it. He arrived at the Pine Kirk Care Center to protect his community and was killed in the line of duty by a gunman who also took the lives of two nursing home employees. Chief DiSario was 36. He had six children and a seventh on the way.

Our thoughts and our prayers are with Chief DiSario’s family and the families of all of our first responders, who worry each day that their loved ones may not return home. Think about that. For soldiers, marines, sailors, police officers, and firefighters, so often when they kiss their spouse goodbye and go to work, there is always the anxiety at home. It is not just the sacrifice that our soldiers and our military personnel and our police officers make; it is the sacrifice their families make too.

Sadly, Police Chief DiSario wasn’t the only Ohio officer to lay down his life this year. In January, Officer David J. Fahey of the Cleveland Police Department was working the scene of an accident on I-90 and was struck and killed in a despicable act of hit-and-run.

This week in Washington, we honor the five Ohio officers killed in the line of duty last year. Aaron Christian of the Chesapeake Police Department was killed in a car accident while on patrol. While conducting traffic, Trooper Kenneth Velez of Elyria was killed by a driver under the influence of drugs. Officer Sean Johnson was the first officer to be killed in the line of duty in the town of Hilliard when he succumbed to injuries from a motorcycle accident during a training exercise. Officer Steven Smith was shot and killed during a SWAT standoff in Columbus. Officer Thomas Cottrell, Jr., of Danville was killed in a heinous and cowardly ambush. Each of these losses is a tragedy for a family, for a community, and for fellow police officers.

As we honor the work and sacrifices made by law enforcement throughout Police Week, we need to offer more than kind words; we need action to support law enforcement as they work to keep our communities safe.

Yesterday, I was talking to Police Chief Richard Biehl of Dayton and Youngstown Police Chief Robert Lees about what more we should do to support officers and their families. This

week, we have unanimously passed several pieces of bipartisan legislation that will provide new support to the officers who protect us and the families who sacrifice alongside them.

The Public Safety Officers’ Benefits Improvement Act, which Senator GRASSLEY introduced, will put pressure on the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the DOJ to speed up claims processing so families of disabled officers or fallen officers get their benefits more quickly.

We passed the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act, introduced by Indiana Senators DONNELLY and YOUNG, to help law enforcement agencies establish or enhance mental health services, like peer monitoring pilot programs and crisis hotlines, for their officers. I learned about this bill from my friend Jay McDonald from Marion, OH, whose advocacy for police officers and their families makes a huge difference for Ohio’s law enforcement communities. He has been the president of the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police for some time.

We approved Senator CORNYN’s American Law Enforcement Heroes Act of 2017, which would allow local police departments to use Federal grant money to hire veterans as law enforcement officers. It is a bipartisan, commonsense idea that would open new doors for those who served our communities and our Nation in the military and who have accrued and developed skills that will serve well their communities in police work.

We have a solemn obligation to the children of fallen officers whose lives are forever changed because of the heroism of their mother or father. The bipartisan Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act—which I have introduced with Senators CASEY and DONNELLY, two Democrats, as well as two Republican Senators, TOOMEY and COLLINS—would increase access to Pell grants for the surviving children of law enforcement who lay down their lives for their communities. It would ensure that all children of fallen officers are eligible for the maximum Federal Pell grant. Of course, we can’t repay the debt we owe these families, but we can ease the burden on their children as they prepare for their future.

We need to do everything we can to ensure that officers and family members get the benefits and help they deserve. We also need to do more to give officers the tools they need to protect themselves. This week, I joined a group of Senators calling for full funding of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership.

I have written to the Department of Justice thanking them for their work so far and urging them to speed up distributing funding we passed as part of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. The bipartisan bill created the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program to provide funding to police departments to train first responders as they deal with opioid-related incidents.

More and more officers are being exposed to fentanyl out in the field. Just this week in Eastern Ohio, an officer in East Liverpool was the victim of an accidental fentanyl overdose. He survived, but the situation was perilous. We need to make sure officers have the equipment they need to handle this deadly opioid look-alike—only more toxic—safely.

Our law enforcement officers put their lives on the line each day to protect us. This Police Week, we owe them more than gratitude; we must show support to the selfless men and women who serve our communities and country every single day, and we must support their actions, their lives, and their families.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to talk about the Russia questions that are on the minds of so many Americans. We had—I think, in the midst of all of the debate and controversy and genuine concern across the country—some good news yesterday when it was announced that Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein had made the decision to appoint a special counsel and, in this case, former FBI Director Mueller. That was good news because, No. 1, there was a special counsel who would undertake a review of these questions and in an independent fashion. I think people across not just Washington but even across the country were heartened by the fact that it was someone of the caliber, the experience, and the dedicated law enforcement commitment that Director Mueller demonstrated in his years with the FBI as Director, as a prosecutor. That was good news.

We are grateful for that. I know we will have a chance in a little while to talk to the Deputy Attorney General about these issues. I think we have to examine a couple more questions that arise.

So to review, on January 26, Acting Attorney General Sally Yates informed the Trump administration that General Flynn had apparently lied about having conversations with the Russian Ambassador, warning that it could open him up to blackmail. On May 8, Yates testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee and stated, contrary to claims by White House officials, that Flynn had discussed Russian sanc-

tions in his those conversations with the Russian Ambassador.

On January 27, President Trump hosted Director Comey at the White House, where the New York Times reported he asked Director Comey to pledge his loyalty. Director Comey reportedly promised only honesty.

On January 30, President Trump fired Acting Attorney General Yates, claiming her dismissal was over a matter unrelated to Russia.

On February 13, fully 18 days after the White House was originally informed by Yates of General Flynn's misconduct, General Flynn was relieved of his job after it became public that he lied about his conversations with the Russian Ambassador.

The day after General Flynn was pushed out, the President reportedly summoned Director Comey to a private meeting in which he took the extraordinary step of asking him to drop the FBI investigation into Flynn.

In March and again in May, Director Comey publicly confirmed that Trump associates were under investigation for possible coordination with Russia to interfere in the election. On May 9, President Trump fired Director Comey. His administration initially said it was based on a recommendation from Attorney General Sessions, who was supposed to be recused from anything to do with the Russia investigation, and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who reportedly had been asked by Director Comey just days earlier for additional funding for the Russia investigation. But then the President himself revealed he fired Director Comey explicitly because of the Russia investigation.

The day after, the President tweeted a veiled threat that Director Comey "better hope that there are no 'tapes'" of their conversation, raising the question of whether the President was surreptitiously recording his Oval Office meetings and whether tapes exist.

While it may be unrelated, it also bears mentioning that, this week, it was also reported that President Trump revealed highly classified information to Russian officials in a private Oval Office meeting—information that could jeopardize critical intelligence assets and risk undermining relationships with allies.

I think there are some serious questions, even with the special counsel who has been named, even with two Intelligence Committees reviewing these matters. I would hope that, in addition to those reviews that are being undertaken—those investigations—that we also have an independent commission to get all of the answers we need so that we can ensure the American people that this will never happen again—that no foreign government, in this case, a foreign adversary, can interfere in an election at any time in our future.

That guarantee will not be ironclad unless we know exactly what happened and why it happened, and then we take

a series of steps to prevent it from happening. We should be very clear with the Russian Federation that if they do this again, they will be sanctioned, and there will be a consequence in response to their actions. We won't be able to do any of that unless we find the answers.

Here are a couple of basic questions I hope would be a part of the deliberations, not just of the two committees or other committees that might review this but also the deliberations and work of the special counsel and his team.

The first question is, Why does the President believe that the Russian election interference investigation is baseless, which is contrary to the unanimous finding of 17 U.S. intelligence agencies? These agencies issued a "high confidence" assessment of the determination they made. That is a technical term in the intelligence circles that they don't use lightly.

Based upon the findings of those intelligence agencies and that finding being of high confidence, why does the President continue to question or even undermine that determination?

Question No. 2 is, Why did Attorney General Sessions, who had to recuse himself from the Russian investigation, weigh in on the firing of the FBI Director responsible for that very investigation? That is a question, I think, a number of people are asking.

Question No. 3 is, Can the Justice Department's political leaders—individuals who have just come in with this administration and officials in the Justice Department—be trusted not to interfere in the ongoing FBI investigation? That is a question.

Question No. 4 is, Why, immediately after firing Director Comey and amid the uproar about interference in the Russian investigation that it created, did the President convene a private meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister and the Russian Ambassador in the Oval Office and allow the Russian state media—the Soviet-era state media entity—to cover that meeting while keeping out the U.S. media? I think that is a question that a lot of people have.

Question No. 5 is, Why did the President reveal highly classified information to the Russian Federation, according to the reporting by the Washington Post and others, during this meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister and the Russian Ambassador, and what are the implications of that disclosure? That is something that we need to have answers to.

At least these five questions—you could add many more—are critically important questions. In some respects, there are even more urgent questions in front of us, and I will focus a little bit on those today—basically, three, I guess.

No. 1, did the President intentionally interfere with the ongoing FBI investigation into his associates, people that were on his campaign or on the campaign or working in the government now? The interference question

seems more likely than not based upon the reporting, but we have to know for sure, one way or the other: Did the President intentionally interfere with an ongoing FBI investigation?

No. 2, are any such efforts to interfere ongoing?

If the answer to the first question is yes—and we don't know for certain if it is question yes, but if it is yes—if there was intentional interference with the investigation by the President, the second question would be, Are there any such efforts to interfere that are ongoing?

No. 3, do they extend—meaning this potential alleged interference—past the FBI inquiry, to the investigations in the Senate and the House of Representatives? I think that is a question that is rather urgent as well.

Will this attempt to interfere, or alleged attempt to interfere, carry over into other investigations?

In essence now, we have three inquiries. One is the House Intelligence Committee, the other is the Senate Intelligence Committee, and the third would be Special Counsel Mueller's investigation. They are all critically important.

I would hope that we could add a fourth to that, which would be an independent commission, like the 9/11 Commission, where we came to definitive conclusions with regard to what happened on 9/11. Then, added to those conclusions, there were a series of recommendations so that we could prevent another 9/11. The same could be said here—that we want to make sure we get answers to these questions, have conclusions made, have accountability with regard to those conclusions, but then have a series of recommendations about how to prevent Russian interference or the interference of any foreign adversary in our election ever again.

Director Comey himself warned about the danger of undue influence on FBI investigations in an exchange during a May 3 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. In this case, it was Senator HIRONO, a Democratic Senator from Hawaii, who asked if the Attorney General or senior Justice Department officials had ever ordered the FBI to halt an investigation.

Interestingly, here is what Director Comey replied to that question: "Not in my experience," meaning not in his experience does he know of an instance where the Justice Department officials interfered with an FBI investigation.

I will read it again.

Not in my experience. Because it would be a big deal to tell the FBI to stop doing something.

Then, he continues on, and it picks up with this:

[W]ithout an appropriate purpose. . . . a situation where we were told to stop something for a political reason, that would be a very big deal. It's not happened in my experience.

That is the now former FBI Director saying that there is no precedence for

the idea that the Justice Department would ask the FBI to take an action, which would be interference.

Director Comey was talking about the Department of Justice in this case—actions by the Department of Justice to interfere with an FBI investigation. In retrospect, perhaps a better question would have been whether the political interference he thought would be a "very big deal" might have been coming directly from the Oval Office. It is essential that we get to the bottom of this—a number of these questions.

An issue of this importance requires that the full investigative power of the Federal Government be brought to bear. The House and Senate Intel Committees are doing their investigation, as I said. The FBI investigation continues as well, despite concerns about independence in the wake of Director Comey's firing.

I hope, and I expect, that the next FBI Director will be someone who will be as independent, as capable, and as committed as Director Mueller is as the new special counsel.

We know there are dedicated professionals running these investigations. It has long been my belief that these extraordinary circumstances demand even more. I have been repeating for some time that we need a greater level of independence to insulate this critically important investigation from any suspicion of partisan interference. That is why I have been calling—for many weeks now, since early March—for a special counsel. I am glad the Justice Department now agrees with me.

Suffice it to say that we have a lot more work to do. Ultimately, this will be the work of everyone here, even if you are not a member of the Intel Committee or any other committee that is doing work that is directly relevant to this because, ultimately, the Congress has to take actions to get to the bottom of these questions but also be part of the process, at least, of imposing accountability and, also, especially the Congress is going to have to play a major role—the leading role—in making sure we put in place policies and procedures and laws that prevent this from ever happening again.

I hope the administration will join us in taking every step necessary to get to the bottom of these questions and to insist and to ensure that this never happens again to any American election. That is not just a goal, that has to be a guarantee as a result of this process. If the administration is not committed to that, I am not sure what they are committed to.

To take lightly or to ignore a problem that is this great and this serious, to undermine our democracy is, I think, to put at risk the very foundation of our Nation as a nation of laws and not of men, a nation that is committed to the rule of law.

I yield the floor.

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. 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.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the nomination of John Sullivan to be Deputy Secretary of State.

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

The clerk will report the nomination. The bill clerk read the nomination of John J. Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill 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 nomination of John J. Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

Mitch McConnell, Cory Gardner, Tom Cotton, Roy Blunt, Jeff Flake, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Ron Johnson, James E. Risch, Joni Ernst, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, Bob Corker, David Perdue, John Hoeven, James M. Inhofe.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the Branstad nomination.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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 up to 10 minutes each.

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

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, for purposes of today's votes, I want to announce that had I voted on Thursday,

May 18, 2017, I would have voted no on confirmation of Rachel Brand to be Associate Attorney General, and I would have voted yea on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 55, the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to China.●

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, during this week, National Police Week, I honor all those who serve to keep us safe. I honor three Maryland officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2016. Corporal Jack Colson of Prince George's County Police Department, Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey, and Deputy First Class Mark Logsdon, both of Harford County Sheriff's office, all dedicated their lives to making Maryland safe. We thank them for their sacrifice, and we thank their families, friends, and fellow officers. They will never be forgotten, and they deserve to be honored not just this week, but every day.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IDAHO ANNE FRANK HUMAN RIGHTS MEMORIAL

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to commend Idahoans and specifically the Boise community for coming together so quickly to fight hate speech and related vandalism.

Kindness, support, and respect run deep in Idaho. The response to the recent vandalism of the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial in Boise, ID, is the most recent example of the depth of compassion in Idahoans. Since the recent vandalism, considerable resources have poured in to repair and enhance the memorial. Rather than responding with anger and hate, Idaho is moving forward with a positive spirit of renewal and inclusiveness. Dan Prinzing, executive director of the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights that built the memorial with support from the Carr Foundation and others and now partners with Boise Parks and Recreation to maintain the memorial, said, "An act of hate by an individual is not us, the community's response to the act is what defines who we are and the values we share. Now what does that do for us? It emboldens the message of the Memorial and reinforces that our work is not done."

The Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial was dedicated to the public 15 years ago to offer a place for visitors to consider and reflect on human rights and inspire engagement with others about the issue. The memorial is a beautiful and thought-provoking resource, which includes a statue of Anne Frank, quotes and excerpts of her writings, as well as a wall of inspiring quotes. The love and care, including the support of Idaho students and their families, that went into this memorial's creation is prevailing upon its

restoration and contributing to ongoing human rights discussions. Among the many quotes highlighted at the memorial is the following from Mother Teresa, "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

I commend all those who are coming together to counter the acts of hateful vandalism with kindness that will continue to echo through our communities and Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO PAMELA ROSSETTI

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, today I wish to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and congratulating Ms. Pamela Rossetti on her 35 years of remarkable service as a fifth and sixth-grade teacher at Lincoln Street School in the Exeter, NH, School District. Throughout her career, Ms. Rossetti has gone above and beyond to meet the needs of her students, as well as her larger school community, by serving as an adviser on a number of committees and taking a leadership role in special projects throughout her tenure. The State of New Hampshire owes her a debt of gratitude for her service.

Ms. Rossetti graduated with her B.A. from Notre Dame College in Manchester, NH, in 1981. She later received her masters of education from Leslie College in Cambridge, MA, with a concentration in integrated teaching through the arts. She was hired by the Exeter School District in 1982 as a sixth-grade teacher. After 2 years, she began teaching in the fifth grade, where she has taught for 33 years.

Throughout her career, Ms. Rossetti has received accolades for her service. In 1983, she received a commendation from New Hampshire's Governor John H. Sununu in recognition of her work with a colleague to create an American citizenship course. She has been a member of both the science and social studies committees for the Exeter School District and served on a number of Lincoln Street School committees, including the arts and health committees. She has also been a mentor teacher and a trainer for the school district's Intel Teach to the Future Program, which focuses on integrating technology into curriculum.

Ms. Rossetti has touched many lives in the Exeter School District, including my son Ben's. Ben experiences disabilities that leave him unable to communicate verbally. Ms. Rossetti was Ben's fifth-grade classroom teacher, and, shortly after the school year, she called me to tell me how smart Ben was. While my family had always thought that Ben was smart and funny, it was incredibly reassuring to know that an objective—and caring—educator thought so as well. She went on to tell me how she had assessed Ben's understanding of sophisticated content material.

Ms. Rossetti's observation impressed me because, in a classroom of students where Ben received support from a spe-

cial education team, Ms. Rossetti still took the time to get to know him and every one of her students as individuals. Because of her ability to do this, Ms. Rossetti has been able to customize her approach to her students and foster their growth and development. Many of Ms. Rossetti's students have been impacted by this level of support and have stayed in contact with her through the years.

The Exeter School District and all of New Hampshire have benefitted greatly from Ms. Rossetti's devotion and service. On behalf of my colleagues and the U.S. Congress, I thank Ms. Pamela Rossetti for her unrelenting commitment to support every one of her students, as well as the entire school community, through her 35 years as a teacher, and I wish her the very best in her retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 419. An act to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.

S. 583. An act to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds to hire veterans as career law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

At 11:46 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it request the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 194. An act to ensure the effective processing of mail by Federal agencies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 195. An act to amend title 44, United States Code, to restrict the distribution of free printed copies of the Federal Register to Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes.

H.R. 653. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to protect unpaid interns in the Federal Government from workplace harassment and discrimination, and for other purposes.

H.R. 672. An act to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in

the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

H.R. 984. An act to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe—Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe.

H.R. 1177. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to release on behalf of the United States the condition that certain lands conveyed to the City of Old Town, Maine, be used for a municipal airport, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1677. An act to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, encourage a negotiated political settlement, and hold Syrian human rights abusers accountable for their crimes.

H.R. 2154. An act to rename the Red River Valley Agricultural Research Center in Fargo, North Dakota, as the Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center.

H.R. 2169. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance information sharing in the Department of Homeland Security State, Local, and Regional Fusion Center Initiative, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2227. An act to modernize Government information technology, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2266. An act to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes.

H.R. 2281. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to reauthorize the Border Enforcement Security Task Force program within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 194. An act to ensure the effective processing of mail by Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 195. An act to amend title 44, United States Code, to restrict the distribution of free printed copies of the Federal Register to Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 653. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to protect unpaid interns in the Federal Government from workplace harassment and discrimination, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 672. An act to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 984. An act to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe—Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Na-

tion, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

H.R. 1177. An act to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to release on behalf of the United States the condition that certain lands conveyed to the City of Old Town, Maine, be used for a municipal airport, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

H.R. 1677. An act to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, encourage a negotiated political settlement, and hold Syrian human rights abusers accountable for their crimes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 2154. An act to rename the Red River Valley Agricultural Research Center in Fargo, North Dakota, as the Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

H.R. 2169. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance information sharing in the Department of Homeland Security State, Local, and Regional Fusion Center Initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2227. An act to modernize Government information technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2266. An act to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 2281. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to reauthorize the Border Enforcement Security Task Force program within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; 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 amendments:

S. 582. A bill to reauthorize the Office of Special Counsel, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-74).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Amul R. Thapar, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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 Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 1171. A bill to keep girls in school around the world, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. COLLINS,

Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1172. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 1173. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 1174. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that a deduction equal to fair market value shall be allowed for charitable contributions of literary, musical, artistic, or scholarly compositions created by the donor; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1175. A bill to protect Federal, State, and local public safety officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING (for himself, Mr. BURR, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1176. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish a simplified income-driven repayment plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BLUNT:

S. 1177. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to require the annual human rights reports to include information on the institutionalization of children and the subjection of children to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, unnecessary detention, and denial of the right to life, liberty, and the security of persons; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BURR, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. COTTON, Ms. WARREN, Mr. KING, and Mr. COONS):

S. 1178. A bill to realign structures and reallocate resources in the Federal Government in keeping with the core belief that families are the best protection for children and the bedrock of any society to bolster United States diplomacy targeted at ensuring that every child can grow up in a permanent, safe, nurturing, and loving family, and to ensure that intercountry adoption to the United States becomes a viable and fully developed option for providing families for children in need, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1179. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to inter in national cemeteries individuals who supported the United States in Laos during the Vietnam War era, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 1180. A bill to advance the integration of clean distributed energy into electric grids, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1181. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal land under

the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. TESTER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. CARPER, Mr. KING, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. WARREN, Mr. NELSON, Mr. DAINES, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 1182. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 1183. A bill to establish a third-party quality system assessment program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 1184. A bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require individuals nominated or appointed to Senate-confirmed positions or to positions of a confidential or policymaking character to disclose certain types of contributions made or solicited by, or on behalf of, the individuals; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1185. A bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 1186. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to designate certain entities as centers of excellence for domestic maritime workforce training and education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1187. A bill to designate the area between the intersections of International Drive, Northwest and Van Ness Street, Northwest and International Drive, Northwest and International Place, Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, as "Liu Xiaobo Plaza", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 1188. A bill to amend title XXIX of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the program under such title relating to lifespan respite care; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 1189. A bill to provide greater controls and restrictions on revolving door lobbying; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. NELSON, Mr.

RUBIO, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. BURR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. Res. 172. A resolution designating May 2017 as "Older Americans Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WICKER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. CARPER, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HATCH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. STRANGE, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. KING, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. NELSON, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COONS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. BURR, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. YOUNG, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCOTT, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. COTTON, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CASEY, Mr. TOOMEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. ENZI, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. CORKER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. HELLER):

S. Res. 173. A resolution designating the week of May 15 through May 21, 2017, as "National Police Week"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. ENZI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PAUL, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. Res. 174. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of Lions Clubs International and celebrating the Lions Clubs International for a long history of humanitarian service; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. COTTON):

S. Con. Res. 15. A concurrent resolution expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2017, as "Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Con. Res. 16. A concurrent resolution expressing support for strengthening engagement between the United States and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 170

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to provide for non-preemption of measures by State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 292

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 292, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate de-

velopment and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 474

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 474, a bill to condition assistance to the West Bank and Gaza on steps by the Palestinian Authority to end violence and terrorism against Israeli citizens.

S. 568

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 568, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 569

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the Land and Water Conservation Fund to maximize the effectiveness of the Fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 591

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 591, a bill to expand eligibility for the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to expand benefits available to participants under such program, to enhance special compensation for members of the uniformed services who require assistance in everyday life, and for other purposes.

S. 597

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 597, a bill to increase Federal Pell Grants for the children of fallen public safety officers, and for other purposes.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 623, a bill to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes.

S. 652

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S.

652, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

S. 765

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 765, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for penalties for the sale of any Purple Heart awarded to a member of the Armed Forces.

S. 976

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 976, a bill to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes.

S. 1002

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1002, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1085

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1085, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide enhanced penalties for convicted murderers who kill or target America's public safety officers.

S. 1094

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1094, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1114

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1114, a bill to nullify the effect of the recent Executive order laying a foundation for discrimination against LGBTQ individuals, women, religious minorities, and others under the pretext of religious freedom.

S. 1135

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1135, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to clarify the Federal Pell Grant duration limits of borrowers who attend an institution of higher education that closes or commits fraud or other misconduct, and for other purposes.

S. 1155

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont

(Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1155, a bill to amend title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to increase the amount of financial support available for working students.

S. 1163

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1163, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure compliance of medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs with requirements relating to the scheduling of appointments, to require appointment by the President and confirmation by the Senate of certain health care officials of the Department, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 1174. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that a deduction equal to fair market value shall be allowed for charitable contributions of literary, musical, artistic, or scholarly compositions created by the donor; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in celebration of Museum Day on May 18, we reintroduce the "Artist-Museum Partnership Act." This legislation would enable our country to keep cherished art works in the United States and to preserve them in our public institutions. At the same time, this legislation will erase an inequity in our Tax Code that currently serves as a disincentive for artists to donate their works to museums and libraries. Since 2000 I have introduced this same bill in each Congress. It was also included in the Senate-passed version of the 2001 tax reconciliation bill, the Senate-passed version of the 2003 Charity Aid, Recovery, and Empowerment, CARE, Act, and the Senate-passed version of the 2005 tax reconciliation bill.

This legislation would preserve cherished art works for the public by allowing artists to take a fair market deduction for works they donate to museums, libraries, colleges and other public institutions. Under current law, artists who donate their created work may only deduct the cost of supplies, while a collector of the same work who donates it to qualified charitable institutions is allowed to take a tax deduction equal to the fair market value of the donated work.

In my State of Vermont, we are incredibly proud of the great works produced by hundreds of local artists who choose to live and work in the Green Mountain State. Displaying their creations in museums and libraries helps develop a sense of pride among Vermonters and strengthens a bond with Vermont, its landscape, its beauty, and its cultural heritage. Anyone who has contemplated a painting in a museum or examined an original

manuscript or composition and has gained a greater understanding of both the artist and the subject as a result, knows the tremendous value of these works. I would like to see more of them, not fewer, preserved in Vermont and across the country.

Prior to 1969, artists and collectors alike were able to take a deduction equivalent to the fair market value of a work. Congress changed the law for artists in response to the perception that some taxpayers were taking advantage of the law by inflating the market value of self-created works. Much has changed in the United States since 1969 when the tax law was amended. There has been an explosion of artistic and literary creativity in the country that is valued throughout the world. Yet, since the law was changed, artists now give far less frequently than before, harming the public by denying it the opportunity to see museum-quality contemporary art. The current tax law discriminates against those who choose to make their living as artists and writers. It also undermines the ability of public and cultural institutions, especially those in small and midsized cities and towns, to collect and preserve our Nation's cultural patrimony. With no or meager acquisition budgets, it is impossible for them to compete in the global art market.

A letter from the distinguished Librarian of Congress Emeritus James Billington stated that "restoration of this tax deduction would vastly benefit their institution's manuscript and music holdings, and remove the single major impediment to developing the Library's graphic arts holdings. The Artist-Museum Partnership Act would once again allow artists who donate their own paintings, manuscripts, compositions, or scholarly compositions to be subject to the same new rules that all taxpayers or collectors who donate such works follow."

This legislation is vital because it reminds us that artists have an important role in the process of engaging communities, and artists are a cultural necessity in the fabric of any community in Vermont or around the world.

The Artist-Museum Partnership Act is supported by such organizations as the Vermont Arts Council, Shelburne Museum, Association of Art Museum Directors, American Alliance of Museums, Americans for the Arts, Dance/USA, League of American Orchestras, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, National Council for the Traditional Arts, OPERA America, Theatre Communications Group, Local Learning, Artists Rights Society, National Humanities Alliance, College Art Association, and Fractured Atlas.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1185. A bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for too long, criminals have exploited loopholes in our gun laws. Congress's failure to properly address this issue has had devastating consequences for families and communities across the country. We have allowed criminals to readily obtain firearms through straw purchasers, trafficking networks, and unregulated gun markets. It is past time for this body to take action.

Today, I am reintroducing bipartisan legislation to close loopholes that allow criminals to obtain firearms through straw purchases and illegal trafficking. I am proud to be joined once again by Senators COLLINS and DURBIN. The Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act would make it a Federal crime to act as a straw purchaser of firearms or to illegally traffic in firearms. It sets forth tough penalties for anyone who transfers a firearm with reasonable cause to believe that the gun will be used in a drug crime, crime of violence, or act of terrorism, or for anyone who smuggles firearms out of the United States. This legislation would help keep guns out of the hands of those who seek to do us harm.

As the opioid crisis reached epidemic levels throughout the United States—and in Northeastern states like Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine in particular—gun traffickers stood ready to profit. Dealers who cannot pass background checks take advantage of addicts by forcing them to make straw purchases. Passing this gun trafficking bill and closing these loopholes will be a key piece of our response to the opioid crisis in so many of our communities.

This legislation will also be an important tool in preventing terrorist attacks on American soil. Terrorists have increasingly turned to guns to carry out domestic attacks, as they did in San Bernardino, Orlando, and Charleston. In the case of San Bernardino, the shooters relied on straw purchasing to acquire their deadly weapons. But because straw purchasing is not a Federal crime, prosecutors only charged the straw purchaser with making a false statement—a so called “paperwork” offense. I have often heard from law enforcement that current law does not do enough to deter gun traffickers. This legislation answers that call.

I also want to take note of National Police Week. This is a time when we pause to thank our Nation's law enforcement officers for their important work and many sacrifices. Earlier this week, thousands of officers gathered for a candlelight memorial. The names of 143 officers killed in the line of duty during 2016 were added to the walls of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. It is not enough to merely pay tribute to these men and women. They deserve action. A year ago during Police Week, President Obama signed into law my legislation reauthorizing the life-saving Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program. That law will

ensure that more than 200,000 officers receive protective vests over the next five years.

The legislation that Senator COLLINS and I introduce today will also help keep our officers and our neighborhoods safe. We must not wait for another national tragedy to address this problem. Only Congress can close these loopholes. I recognize that one piece of legislation cannot prevent all gun violence, but this bill would provide a critical tool to investigate and deter straw purchasers and gun traffickers. That is why it has strong support from groups representing law enforcement officers and prosecutors around the nation, including the Fraternal Order of Police, Major Cities Chiefs Association, Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, National Tactical Officers Association, and National District Attorneys Association.

Like so many Vermonters, I am proud to be a responsible gun owner; and I know that Senator COLLINS shares my commitment to protecting our Second Amendment rights. But we also share a desire to keep guns out of the hands of violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists. There is broad agreement in Congress that our existing gun laws do too little to prevent gun violence in our communities. The legislation we introduce today is an important part of the solution, and I call on all Senators to support this bill and make our communities safer.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, each May we recognize National Police Week to honor the service and sacrifice of U.S. law enforcement officers and to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty. One meaningful way for us to honor our police officers and other law enforcement officials this week is to give them the tools they need to stop the illegal firearms traffickers who threaten their lives and the lives of those they protect.

Today, I rise to join Senator LEAHY in introducing the Stop Illegal Trafficking and Firearms Act. Our bill would strengthen Federal law by making it easier for prosecutors to go after gun traffickers, while fully protecting the rights of the vast majority of gun owners who are law-abiding citizens.

Straw purchasing is intended to achieve only one result, and that is to put a gun in the hands of a criminal who cannot legally obtain one. Today, traffickers exploit weaknesses in our laws by targeting individuals who can lawfully purchase guns, which are then used to commit crimes once they are transferred to the criminal, who would be unable to pass the background check. Right now, a straw purchaser can only be prosecuted for lying on a Federal form, and that is treated as a paperwork violation. Our bill would create new criminal offenses for straw purchasing, which would help our law enforcement officials take down these criminal enterprises.

The illegal guns that we are targeting in our bill are frequently sold,

resold, and trafficked across State lines, resulting in the proliferation of the illegal firearms in our communities. This practice has fueled the violence across our southern border associated with the Mexican drug cartels, as well as gang violence in our cities and, tragically, the heroin crisis that is ravaging so many families and communities and undermining public health and safety in States like Maine.

Police officers tell me they have seen a major influx of drug dealers coming from out of State, straight up I-95's iron pipeline and other interstate highways, with direct ties to gangs in major cities. They are ready to sell or trade prescription opioids and heroin for illegal guns.

Heroin flooding into our communities is reaching crisis levels. In 2016, there were 376 drug-induced overdose deaths in my State, the State of Maine. That is more than car crashes and suicides put together. It is 104 more deaths than the year before. So this crisis with opioids and heroin is getting worse, not better. The vast majority of these overdoses were caused by at least one opioid, whether pharmaceutical or illicit.

Often, drug dealers and gang members follow a similar pattern: They target addicts who have no criminal records, and then they trade or sell them drugs in exchange for guns. These gang members with criminal records cross into Maine and link up with drug addicts to be their straw buyers. These addicts are people with clean records who may legally purchase firearms. The addict then exchanges the gun for heroin to support his or her drug dependency, and the cycle is repeated time and again.

Last year I had a deeply disturbing briefing from Federal law enforcement officials about a case in Maine that fit this exact pattern. Gang members trafficked crack cocaine and heroin between New Haven, CT, and Bangor, ME. They committed acts of violence, including assaults, armed robberies, attempted murder, and murder. They traded narcotics for firearms and then distributed them to other gang members back in Connecticut. This is exactly the type of criminal activity our bill aims to prevent, and it complements existing laws that target criminals who are profiting from firearms and drug trafficking.

Current Federal law makes preventing and prosecuting straw purchasing offenses very difficult for law enforcement officials, since a straw purchaser can be prosecuted only for lying on a Federal form, a relatively minor offense.

The Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act would create new, specific criminal offenses for straw purchasing and trafficking in firearms. Instead of a slap on the wrist, these crimes would be punishable by up to 15 years in prison. For those straw purchasers who knew or have reasonable cause to believe that the firearm would be used to

commit a crime of violence, that crime would be punishable by up to 25 years in prison.

Our bill would also strengthen existing laws that prohibit gun smuggling. Right now, it is illegal for someone to smuggle a firearm into the United States with the intent to engage in drug trafficking or violent crime. To combat the drug cartels operating on our southern border, however, we must also prohibit firearms and ammunition from being trafficked out of the United States for those illegal purposes. In so doing, our bill would provide an important tool to combat trafficking organizations that are exporting firearms and ammunition from the United States and into Mexico where they are used by the drug cartels that are in turn fueling the heroin crisis here at home.

In a recent investigation along our southern border, ATF agents seized nearly 40,000 rounds of illegal ammunition from suspects who were attempting to smuggle both firearms and ammunition across the border and into Mexico. Similarly, a large percentage of the guns used in crimes in our large cities were trafficked across State lines.

I want to emphasize that our bill fully protects the Second Amendment rights of our law-abiding citizens. It protects legitimate private gun sales and is drafted to avoid sweeping in innocent transactions and placing unnecessary burdens on lawful private sales. It expressly exempts certain transactions that are permitted under current laws, such as gifts, raffles, and auctions. Furthermore, the bill expressly prohibits any authority provided by this act from being used to establish a Federal firearms registry—something I am strongly opposed to.

I started my remarks by reminding us all that this is National Police Week. Let's honor our police officers and other law enforcement by giving them this much needed tool to crack down on illegal firearm traffickers who are exploiting our addicts in so many ways in order to obtain guns that they are not legally able to purchase. I urge my colleagues to support this much needed legislation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 172—DESIGNATING MAY 2017 AS “OLDER AMERICANS MONTH”

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. NELSON, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. BURR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 172

Whereas President John F. Kennedy first designated May as “Senior Citizens Month” in 1963;

Whereas, in 1963, only approximately 17,000,000 individuals living in the United States were age 65 or older, approximately 1/3 of those individuals lived in poverty, and few programs existed to meet the needs of older individuals in the United States;

Whereas, in 2017, there are more than 47,800,000 individuals age 65 or older in the United States, and those individuals account for 14.9 percent of the total population of the United States;

Whereas approximately 10,000 individuals in the United States turn age 65 each day;

Whereas, in 2015, more than 9,300,000 veterans of the Armed Forces were age 65 or older;

Whereas older individuals in the United States rely on Federal programs, such as programs under the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 301 et seq.) (including the Medicare program under title XVIII of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) and the Medicaid program under title XIX of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.)), for financial security and high-quality affordable health care;

Whereas the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) provides supportive services to help individuals of the United States who are age 60 or older maintain maximum independence in the homes and communities of those individuals;

Whereas that Act provides funding for programs, including nutrition services, transportation, and care management, to assist more than 11,000,000 older individuals in the United States each year;

Whereas compared to older individuals in the United States in past generations, older individuals in the United States in 2017 are working longer, living longer, and enjoying healthier, more active, and more independent lifestyles;

Whereas more than 5,300,000 individuals in the United States age 65 or older continue to work as full-time, year-round employees;

Whereas older individuals in the United States play an important role in society by continuing to contribute their experience, knowledge, wisdom, and accomplishments;

Whereas older individuals in the United States play vital roles in their communities and remain involved in volunteer work, mentoring activities, the arts, cultural activities, and civic engagement; and

Whereas a society that recognizes the success of older individuals and continues to enhance their access to quality and affordable health care will encourage the ongoing participation and heightened independence of those individuals and will ensure the continued safety and well-being of those individuals: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 2017 as “Older Americans Month”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to provide opportunities for older individuals to continue to flourish by—

(A) emphasizing the importance and leadership of older individuals through public recognition of the ongoing achievements of the older individuals;

(B) presenting opportunities for older individuals to share their wisdom, experience, and skills with younger generations; and

(C) recognizing older individuals as valuable assets in strengthening communities across the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 173—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF MAY 15 THROUGH MAY 21, 2017, AS “NATIONAL POLICE WEEK”

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. LEAHY,

Mr. WICKER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. CARPER, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HATCH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. STRANGE, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. KING, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. NELSON, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COONS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. BURR, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. YOUNG, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCOTT, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. COTTON, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CASEY, Mr. TOOMEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. ENZI, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. CORKER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. HELLER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 173

Whereas, in 1962, John Fitzgerald Kennedy signed the Joint Resolution entitled “Joint Resolution to authorize the President to proclaim May 15 of each year as Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week of each year during which such May 15 occurs as Police Week” (36 U.S.C. 136);

Whereas the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, dedicated on October 15, 1991, is the national monument to honor law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty;

Whereas Federal, State, local, and tribal police officers, sheriffs, and other law enforcement officers across the United States serve with valor, dignity and integrity;

Whereas law enforcement officers are charged with pursuing justice for all individuals and performing their duties with fidelity to the constitutional and civil rights of the individuals that the law enforcement officers serve;

Whereas the resolve of law enforcement officers in the service of their communities is unyielding, despite inherent dangers in the performance of their duties;

Whereas the vigilance, compassion, and decency of law enforcement officers are the best defense of society against individuals who seek to do harm;

Whereas Peace Officers Memorial Day, 2017, honors the 143 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty during 2016, including Amir Abdul-Khaliq, Lorne Bradley Aherns, Sean Lewis Allred, Manuel Alejandro Alvarez, Scott Alfred Ballantyne, Robert Aaron Barker, Gregory Eugene Barney, Douglas Scott Barney, II, Jose Daniel Barraza, Scott Leslie Bashioum, Stacey Allen Baumgartner, Brian Pecson Beliso, Anthony David Beminiio, Kenneth Levella Bettis, Timothy James Brackeen, Allen David Brandt, James Irwin Brockmeyer, Cody James Brotherson, Shannon Matthew Brown, Patrick Thomas Carothers, Nathaniel Alan Carrigan, Jose Ismael Chavez, Aaron Jackson Christian, Thomas L. Clardy, Paul Allen Clark, Brandon Scott Collins, Jacai David Colson, Adam Scott Conrad, William Pressley Cooper, Clint E. Corvinus, Thomas Wayne Cottrell, Jr., Sean Eamonn Cullen, Patrick Bryan Dailey, Jonathan Matias DeGuzman, Chad Phillip Dermeyer, Cody James Donahue, Endy Nddiobong Ekpanya, David Kyle Elahi, Eric Dale Ellsworth, Susan Louise Farrell, William George Fearon, Scot Fitzgerald, Leander Frank,

De'Greaun Reshun Frazier, Anthony Joseph Freeman, Jason Gallero, Bradford Allen Garafola, Sr., Derek Mace Geer, Matthew Lane Gerald, David Van Glasser, Dan Thomas Glaze, Jr., David Gomez, Jason Michael Goodding, Ashley Marie Guindon, R. Jake Gutierrez, Adam John Hartwig, David Stefan Hofer, Jack Lanceson Hopkins, Natasha Maria Hunter, John Thomas Isenhour, Montrell Lyle Jackson, Allen Lee Jacobs, Myron Anthony Jarrett, Mari Ann Johnson, Sean Richard Johnson, Michael Jason Katherman, Ronald Eugene Kienzle, Carl Allen Koontz, John Robert Kotfila, Jr., Michael Leslie Krol, Brad D. Lancaster, Zachary Tyler Larnerd, Jude Williams Lewis, Mark Franklin Logsdon, Alfonso Lopez, Rod Barron Lucas, Kenneth Hubert Maltby, Benjamin Edward Marconi, Justin Scott Martin, Lisa Anne Mauldin, Henry Malcolm McAleenan, Jr., Calvin Marcus McCullers, Jr., J. Scott McGuire, Luis A. Melendez-Maldonado, Robert David Melton, David Francis Michel, Jr., Kevin Dwayne Miller, Shawn Glenn Miller, Derrick Morial Mingo, Kenneth Ray Moats, Jason David Moszer, Kristopher David Moules, Jeffrey Don Nichols, Eric James Oliver, David Ortiz, Steven C. Owen, Edwin R. Pabon-Robles, Joseph George Portaro, Timothy P. Pratt, Carlos Bernabe Puente-Morales, Jorge Ramos, Robert Eugene Ransom, Darrin Lee Reed, Waldemar Rivera-Santiago, Victor M. Rosado-Rosa, Collin James Rose, Jorge Sanchez, Justin Ryan Scherlen, Nikeelan D. Semmon, Daryl Wayne Smallwood, Nicholas Ryan Smarr, Jody Carl Smith, Michael Joseph Smith, Steven Michael Smith, Timothy Kevin Smith, Verdell Smith, Sr., Harvey Snook, III, Blake Curtis Snyder, Patrick Michael Sondron, Kenneth Joseph Starrs, Kenneth Melvin Steil, Paul R. Stuewer, Martin Tase Sturgill, II, Ronald Tarentino, Jr., James Lee Tartt, Nathan Daniel Taylor, Ryan Sean Thomas, Brent Alan Thompson, Paul J. Tuozzolo, Jose Gilbert Vega, Kenneth V. Velez, Michael Josua Ventura, Dennis Randall Wallace, Landon Eugene Weaver, Justin Scott White, Frankie Lamar Williams, Michael Scott Williams, Michael Arthur Winter, Kerry Joseph Winters, Sr., Patricio Enrique Zamarripa, Joseph Peter Zangaro, Marco Antonio Zarate, and Lesley Marie Zerebny; and

Whereas, during the first 4 months of 2017, 42 law enforcement officers across the United States have made the ultimate sacrifice: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of May 15 through May 21, 2017, as “National Police Week”;

(2) expresses strong support for law enforcement officers across the United States for their efforts to build safer and more secure communities;

(3) recognizes the need to ensure that law enforcement officers have the equipment, training, and resources necessary to protect their health and safety while the law enforcement officers are protecting the public;

(4) recognizes the members of the law enforcement community for their selfless acts of bravery;

(5) acknowledges that police officers and other law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice should be remembered and honored;

(6) expresses condolences to the loved ones of each law enforcement officer who has made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty; and

(7) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Police Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the vital role of law enforcement officers in building safer and more secure communities across the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 174—RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL AND CELEBRATING THE LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL FOR A LONG HISTORY OF HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

Mr. MORAN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. ENZI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PAUL, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 174

Whereas, on June 7, 1917, Chicago business leader Melvin Jones founded Lions Clubs International in Chicago, Illinois, based on the principle that “[y]ou can't get very far until you start doing something for somebody else”;

Whereas the motto of Lions Clubs International, “We Serve”;

(1) was selected in 1954 after having been submitted by Lion D.A. Stevenson of Font Hill, Ontario, in an international contest; and

(2) applies to the charitable and humanitarian priorities of Lions Clubs International, including—

(A) eyesight preservation and blindness prevention;

(B) services for individuals with disabilities;

(C) hearing and speech conservation;

(D) diabetes awareness;

(E) youth outreach;

(F) services for older individuals;

(G) activities that promote international goodwill;

(H) disaster relief; and

(I) environmental protection;

Whereas, with over 46,000 clubs and 1,400,000 members in over 200 countries and geographical areas around the globe, Lions Clubs International is the largest service organization in the world;

Whereas the purposes of Lions Clubs International include—

(1) to create and foster a spirit of understanding among people around the world;

(2) to promote the principles of good government and good citizenship;

(3) to take an active interest in the civic, cultural, social, and moral welfare of the community;

(4) to provide a forum for the open discussion of all matters of public interest, except that members of Lions Clubs International may not debate partisan politics and sectarian religion;

(5) to encourage service-minded individuals to serve their communities without personal financial reward; and

(6) to encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in commerce, industry, public works, and professional and private endeavors;

Whereas, on March 12, 1920, a Lions Club was chartered in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, and Lions Clubs became an international organization;

Whereas, in 1925, at the Lions Club in Cedar Point, Ohio, Helen Keller charged members of Lions Clubs International with becoming “knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness”;

Whereas, in 1926, polar explorer and member of the District of Columbia Lions Club, Admiral Richard E. Byrd, Jr., flew over the North Pole carrying the flag of Lions Clubs International;

Whereas, in 1930, after witnessing an individual with a vision impairment having difficulty crossing a street, Lion George Bonham painted a cane white with a red

band for use by visually impaired individuals;

Whereas, in 1931—

(1) the first Lions Club was established south of the United States in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico; and

(2) the first Lions Clubs International convention was held in Toronto, Ontario;

Whereas, in 1935, during the Lions Clubs International convention in Mexico City, Amelia Earhart, who was an honorary member of the New York City Lions Club, completed a record-breaking nonstop flight from Los Angeles, California, to Mexico;

Whereas, in 1939, the members of the Detroit Uptown Lions Club converted an old farmhouse in the State of Michigan into a school to train dog guides for visually impaired individuals, helping to popularize dog guides worldwide;

Whereas, on June 6, 1939, the first Little League baseball game was played at Park Point in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, after Lion Carl Edwin Stotz appealed to Lions Clubs International, the Young Men's Christian Association, and other community partners for support to provide an organized baseball program for children;

Whereas, in 1944, the first eye bank in the world was established in New York City, and as of March 2017, most eye banks are sponsored by Lions Clubs International;

Whereas, in 1945, Lions Clubs International assisted in drafting the Charter of the United Nations, which began a lasting relationship between Lions Clubs International and the United Nations that includes Lions Clubs International aid and volunteers for—

(1) the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund;

(2) the World Health Organization;

(3) the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; and

(4) other humanitarian projects;

Whereas, in 1957, the Leo Clubs youth program of Lions Clubs International was established to provide young people with the opportunity for personal development through volunteer work;

Whereas, as of March 2017, there are approximately 157,000 Leos and 600 Leo Clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas worldwide;

Whereas, in 1968, the Lions Clubs International Foundation (referred to in this preamble as “LCIF”) was established to assist Lions Clubs International with global and large-scale local humanitarian projects;

Whereas LCIF has given more than \$826,000,000 in grants to support the humanitarian work of Lions Clubs International;

Whereas, in 1972, LCIF awarded its first grant, in the amount of \$5,000, to assist flood victims in South Dakota;

Whereas, in 1977, Lion Jimmy Carter became the 39th President of the United States;

Whereas, in 1985, LCIF awarded its first Major Catastrophe Grant, in the amount of \$50,000, for earthquake relief in Mexico;

Whereas, in 1986, Mother Teresa accepted a Lions Humanitarian Award;

Whereas, in 1987, Lions Clubs International amended its bylaws and invited women to become members, and women are now the fastest growing group of new members in Lions Clubs International;

Whereas, in 1990, LCIF launched SightFirst, an initiative that—

(1) assists Lions Clubs International in activities to restore eyesight and prevent blindness on a global scale; and

(2) eventually raised more than \$415,000,000 to target low vision, trachoma, river blindness, childhood blindness, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma;

Whereas, in 1995, LCIF began a partnership with the Carter Center, led by former President and Lion Jimmy Carter, to combat

river blindness in Africa and Latin America, and by 2003, LCIF and the Carter Center had provided 50,000,000 river blindness treatments;

Whereas, in 2001, LCIF partnered with the Special Olympics on Opening Eyes, an initiative to provide vision screening for Special Olympics athletes;

Whereas, in 2002, Lions Clubs International chartered a club in China, which became the first voluntary membership group in China;

Whereas, in 2007, the Financial Times ranked LCIF as the best nongovernmental organization worldwide with which to establish a partnership;

Whereas, in 2010, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation contributed \$5,000,000 to the One Shot, One Life measles initiative, and Lions raised more than \$10,000,000 to support measles prevention efforts during the subsequent 2 years;

Whereas, in 2011, LCIF awarded its 10,000th grant, bringing the total amount awarded to grant recipients by LCIF to \$708,000,000;

Whereas, in 2013, LCIF partnered with the GAVI Alliance to protect millions of children from measles and rubella in 2013;

Whereas LCIF committed \$30,000,000 for immunizations, an amount matched by the United Kingdom and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation;

Whereas, in 2013, with the support of Lions Clubs International and the Carter Center, river blindness was eliminated in Colombia; and

Whereas, in 2014, Lions Clubs International launched the Centennial Service Challenge, a global initiative to serve 100,000,000 people around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates Lions Clubs International on its 100th anniversary on June 7, 2017;

(2) recognizes Lions Clubs International for 100 years of promoting community service and humanitarian assistance;

(3) encourages Lions Clubs International to continue to emphasize the values of community service and improving the community for all individuals; and

(4) applauds Lions Clubs International for instilling in young people the value of community service.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 15—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 28, 2017, AS “HONORING THE NATION’S FIRST RESPONDERS DAY”

Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. COTTON) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. CON. RES. 15

Whereas first responders include professional and volunteer fire, police, emergency medical technician, and paramedic workers in the United States;

Whereas there are more than 25,300,000 first responders in the United States working to keep communities safe;

Whereas first responders deserve to be recognized for their commitment to safety, defense, and honor; and

Whereas October 28, 2017, would be an appropriate day to establish as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) supports the designation of October 28, 2017, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”;

(2) honors and recognizes the contributions of first responders; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the contributions of first responders in the United States.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 16—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR STRENGTHENING ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 16

Whereas the United States and the other members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (in this preamble referred to as “APEC”) have, since 1989, worked collaboratively to advance commercial and trade interests in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas the Asia-Pacific region accounts for 41 percent of the world’s population, 54 percent of the world’s gross domestic product, and 44 percent of the world’s trade;

Whereas expanding trade and investment between the United States and the Asia-Pacific region has created new commercial opportunities and jobs in the United States;

Whereas United States businesses in the Asia-Pacific region face obstacles to doing business in the region as a result of tariff and nontariff barriers, including discriminatory policies and regulations;

Whereas strengthening trade and investment between the United States and other APEC members and addressing tariff and nontariff barriers to United States exports has the potential to benefit United States businesses, manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, workers, and consumers;

Whereas APEC was established as a regional economic forum to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific region to create greater prosperity for the people of the region and serves as a forum for the United States to address business concerns, promote high standards, and facilitate economic growth in the region;

Whereas APEC contributes to United States economic policies that promote fairness, due process, and the rule of law by supporting trade rules embodied in the World Trade Organization (in this preamble referred to as the “WTO”) and the establishment of new WTO commitments, developing model measures for high quality trade agreements in the Asia-Pacific region, encouraging coherence in regulations and standards in the region, and encouraging policies to promote development of the digital economy; and

Whereas the APEC Leaders’ Meeting in November 2017 in Da Nang, Vietnam, and preparatory meetings at the ministerial level, including the meeting in May 2017 of the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade, provide important opportunities to demonstrate to the world the commitment of the United States to increasing prosperity and security in the Asia-Pacific region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the continuing success of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (in this resolution referred to as “APEC”) is in the na-

tional economic interest of the United States;

(2) APEC should be a part of the diplomatic and economic strategy of the United States for the Asia-Pacific region; and

(3) the United States should continue to engage APEC in promoting economic growth through the adoption of rules-based policies to strengthen trade and investment between the United States and other APEC members.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I have 7 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the majority and minority leaders.

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 18, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. in open session to consider nominations.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Domestic and International Policy Update.”

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to hold an Executive Session during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 18, 2017, at 10 a.m. in Room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to hold a hearing on Thursday, May 18, 2017, at 10:15 a.m. in Room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC. The purpose of the hearing is to consider the nomination of Mr. David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 18, 2017, at 10:30 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to consider favorably reporting the Creating High-Quality Results and Outcomes Necessary to Improve Chronic (CHRONIC) Care Act of 2017.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled “Nominations.”

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on May 18, 2017, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate

Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 172, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 172) designating May 2017 as "Older Americans Month."

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. 172) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 173, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 173) designating the week of May 15 through May 21, 2017, as "National Police Week."

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. 173) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service; that the nominations be confirmed, that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the

table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

* PN116 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of Alexander Dickie, IV, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 21, 2017.

* PN353 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (201) beginning Joel Justin Agaloff, and ending Iva Ziza, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 25, 2017.

* PN354-1 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (96) beginning Edward Francis Acevedo, and ending Benjamin D. Zinner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 25, 2017.

* PN355-1 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (19) beginning Jim Nelson Barnhart, Jr., and ending Anne N. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 25, 2017.

* PN356 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (9) beginning Jeanne F. Bailey, and ending Robert Henry Hanson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 25, 2017.

* PN357-1 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (20) beginning Jeffery S. Austin, and ending Jeffrey G. Willnow, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 25, 2017.

* PN358-1 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of Scott S. Sindelar, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 25, 2017.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MAY 22, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, May 22; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Branstad nomination; further, that the time until 5:30 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form; finally, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the postcloture time on the Branstad nomination expire at 5:30 p.m. Monday.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
MAY 22, 2017, AT 3 P.M.

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.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:24 p.m., adjourned until Monday, May 22, 2017, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DAVID J. REDL, OF NEW YORK, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION, VICE LAWRENCE E. STRICKLING.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

CLAIRE M. GRADY, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE RUSSELL C. DEYO.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

NEOMI RAO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, VICE HOWARD A. SHELANSKI.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. JOHN P. LAWLOR, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. DION B. MOTEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. BOWLMAN T. BOWLES III

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 brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL R. FENZEL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

WILLIAM F. MCCLINTOCK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

DAVID S. ALLEN
MARCUS A. BUSSELL
ALLEN R. HORNER
KENNETH P. HUTNICK
BRAD G. JOHNSON
ALEXANDER V. MCLEMORE
JOE H. MILLER II
JUDE B. MULVEY
BARRY K. VINCENT

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

JEFFREY L. WASHINGTON

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 716:

To be lieutenant commander

KENNETH M. KING

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

GARRY P. CLOSAS

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 6222:

To be colonel

JASON K. FETTIG

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate May 18, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RACHEL L. BRAND, OF IOWA, TO BE ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TODD PHILIP HASKELL, OF FLORIDA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND

PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO.

TULINABO SALAMA MUSHINGI, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU.

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF ALEXANDER DICKIE IV.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOEL JUSTIN AGALSOFF AND ENDING WITH IVA ZIZA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 25, 2017.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH EDWARD FRANCIS ACEVEDO AND ENDING WITH BENJAMIN

D. ZINNER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 25, 2017.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JIM NELSON BARNHART, JR. AND ENDING WITH ANNE N. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 25, 2017.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEANNE F. BAILEY AND ENDING WITH ROBERT HENRY HANSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 25, 2017.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFFERY S. AUSTIN AND ENDING WITH JEFFREY G. WILLNOW, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 25, 2017.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF SCOTT S. SINDELAR.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING TOMMY L.
McCULLOUGH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. Tommy L. McCullough, who was born in Pickens, Madison County, Mississippi to the late parents of W.E.L. and Classie McCullough. He was the youngest of twenty siblings, where ten (10) were added by marriage.

Mr. Tommy L. McCullough was raised in Valley View, Mississippi and attended Nichols School until the eighth grade. Later he went to Cameron Street High School and left to go to the Army while he was in the 12th grade.

Mr. McCullough entered the Army on December 13, 1954, and was in the 25th Division at Scofield Barracks in Hawaii. While there an Honor Guard was formed after a few months, and height requirements were 5 feet 10 inches tall. But, because he was sharp and intelligent he was chosen to be a Guard, although he was 5 feet 8 inches tall. They later changed the title from Guard to Drill Platoon. No one could handle a rifle the way Mr. McCullough handled it, and he was recognized with many letters of congratulations for his performance in the Drill Platoon. He also went to the Non-Commission Officer Academy and received a diploma. Within two years, he went from a Private to SP3 (Specialist 3rd class). There he stayed until his discharge on November 27, 1956 and went back to Jackson, Mississippi.

He had many friends who were Civil Rights Activist, one of them was a Freedom Rider. Mr. Jake Freeze was one of the leaders in the Freedom Riders Movement that lived in his house in 1963, which was later called the Freedom House in Madison County. Pictures are on the wall of the Civil Rights Museum in Canton, Mississippi, today.

Mr. McCullough afterwards moved to Louisville, KY in 1965. He worked at Harshaws Chemical Company for about five years. He missed Mississippi so much that he came back and opened up a night club, Billa Farro, for five years in Jackson and later opened a Car Dealership, TC and III, and then he retired.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Tommy L. McCullough for his dedication to serving others.

TRIBUTE TO CONNIE AND GARY
PENICK

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Connie

and Gary Penick of Milo, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on March 3rd, 2017.

Connie and Gary's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 50th Anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together, and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

RECOGNIZING MARION COUNTY
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Marion County Sheriff Billy Woods, City of Belleview Police Chief Terry Holland, and the law enforcement officers who keep Marion County safe every single day.

This week marks the annual observance of Police Week. Though we set aside one week a year to honor law enforcement, I encourage all Americans to join me not only this week, but every day, in recognizing the honor, courage, and commitment of America's law enforcement.

Our law enforcement are heroes in the community. They keep us safe, and are willing to put their lives on the line every day in the course of their duties. It is impossible to fully express our gratitude or adequately recognize the professionalism of the men and women who voluntarily put their lives on the line for our safety and security. It is with deep respect that we pause today to honor the memory of the heroes who gave the last full measure of devotion and made the ultimate sacrifice.

I want to extend my sincere appreciation to Marion County Sheriff Billy Woods, City of Belleview Police Chief Terry Holland, and the law enforcement officers who bravely and selflessly serve Marion County. It is an honor to recognize them and all men and women in law enforcement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Vote No. 259, I would have voted Nay on ordering the previous question on H. Res.

323, providing for consideration of H.R. 115. On Roll Call Vote No. 260, I would have voted No on agreeing to H. Res. 323, providing for consideration of H.R. 115. On Roll Call Vote No. 261, I would have voted Nay on tabling the ruling of the Chair. On Roll Call Vote No. 262, I would have voted Yea on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1177, Removing Outdated Restrictions to Allow for Job Growth Act.

IN MEMORY OF LUCY CASADO

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of Lucy Casado, beloved matriarch of the landmark restaurant Lucy's El Adobe Café in Los Angeles, California, who passed away on May 2, 2017.

Lucy was born in El Paso, Texas on January 18, 1926. Although she originally wanted to pursue a career in medicine, she decided that cooking was a reasonable alternative. In 1964, she and her husband, Frank, opened a small one-room café, Lucy's El Adobe Café, as a family business, on Melrose Avenue, across the street from Paramount Studios in Los Angeles.

The warm, cozy restaurant grew to become a popular destination for a variety of actors such as John Belushi and Jack Nicholson, and musicians such as Linda Ronstadt, Jackson Browne and Don Henley. Also a favorite spot for politicians, Governor Jerry Brown frequented the café long before he became an elected official, and he became a close friend of the Casado family. Other elected officials such as Senator Bob Dole, Senator Robert Kennedy, and Vice-President Hubert Humphrey were known to patronize the café when visiting from Washington, DC. Many of the celebrities that were seen walking through the restaurant doors developed personal and long-lasting relationships with Lucy, and were proud to watch as El Adobe Café cemented itself as a beloved cornerstone of the Los Angeles community.

Lucy and her family had a passion for political and social activism, and in 1960, they co-founded the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) as a way to elect Mexican-American candidates to public office, and to work on social and economic justice issues. Mrs. Casado also supported numerous charitable causes, and Lucy's El Adobe Café hosted many fundraisers for worthwhile organizations, including her favorite charity, the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter Los Angeles.

Preceded in death by her husband Frank in 1990, Lucy is survived by her three children: daughter Patricia and sons Darryl and Frank James.

Lucy was an irreplaceable part of our community and she will be sorely missed by her family, friends and all those who called Lucy's

• 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.

El Adobe Café their home away from home. I ask all members to join me in remembering Lucy Casado.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLOTTE AND BOB BANCROFT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Charlotte and Bob Bancroft of Atlantic, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on February 4, 2017.

Charlotte and Bob's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 50th Anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion and in wishing them nothing but the best.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, on May 17, 2017, I was not present for the recorded votes on rollcall No. 261 and 262. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on the motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the chair and YEA on H.R. 1177, the Removing Outdated Restrictions to Allow for Job Growth Act.

INVESTING IN AMERICA'S FUTURE THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to act to improve the sad state of our nation's infrastructure.

This week is national infrastructure week, where we recognize America's infrastructure. Sadly, what we have to recognize isn't particularly positive.

This year's infrastructure grade from the American Society of Civil Engineers is a "D+." Sound infrastructure is literally and figuratively the foundation of our nation's economy. We must do better than a D+.

We know from our country's history that infrastructure projects move forward most effectively when local, state, and federal governments all do their part.

We, in California, are no strangers to infrastructure problems caused by a lack of invest-

ment, but we are stepping up to make crucial improvements. In my district, Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties have all increased their local sales taxes in order to pay for crucial road repairs, new roads and highways, and other essential transportation projects. Last month California enacted a bill to increase the state gas tax and vehicle fees to pay for road, bridge, and other transportation improvement projects. Clearly these tough decisions come with policy implications and political risks. This includes Governor Brown's decision to pursue high speed rail, which the President supports.

There is a reason we are no longer investing in our infrastructure, and it is lack of political will.

Now it is time for the federal government to face this challenge head on, and we know we can because we have begun the process in California.

In the Valley, we have serious challenges with our water infrastructure. We need significant improvements to our water storage, water delivery, and drinking water systems. We have taken some initial steps to resolve these challenges, by acting at the state and federal level. In 2014, California passed Proposition 1, which authorized \$7.12 billion for state water infrastructure projects. Late last year, after years of hard work by myself and my colleagues in the California delegation, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act, or the WIIN Act, became law. This law authorizes vital water projects across the country, including projects in the Valley, such as additional storage at the New Exchequer Dam and San Luis Reservoir in Merced County and increased funding for water recycling projects, like the North Valley Regional Recycled Water Program, which will provide 50,000 acre-feet of new water for Merced and Stanislaus counties.

Although more must be done to improve California's infrastructure, this good first step demonstrates the type of success we can achieve when all levels of government work to do their part on a bipartisan basis.

President Trump has stated that significant investment in infrastructure is one of his Administration's highest priorities. This is an opportunity for Congress and the Administration to work together on a bipartisan basis to invest in the future of our nation.

But he must be more specific about the breadth and width of his vision. He needs to answer the following questions: How much will it cost? Where will the money come from? How will he incentivize state and local governments to come up with matching funds and get the private sector to invest? Equally important, what will the breakdown of investment be in the various types of infrastructure, such as transportation, port and harbor, and water infrastructure?

If the President works with members of Congress to create a serious and smart plan here, there is great possibility for bipartisan support because no bridge, road, or dam is Democratic or Republican.

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF LA PORTE, TX

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the City of La Porte, in Harris County, Texas.

Located just south of where the Houston Ship Channel meets Galveston Bay, La Porte is a small Texas town, rich in history, and built on community. French for "The Door," the City of La Porte was incorporated on August 10, 1892. The city founder's vision for La Porte consisted of four objectives: the establishment of a great commercial center and leading harbor on the coast of Texas; the establishment of a natural summer and winter resort area; the building of a manufacturing center for the Southwest; and the establishment of an education center second to none in the Southwest.

Today, La Porte is known as a sleepy escape from the big city and is home to numerous, shipyards and petrochemical manufacturing plants which play an inviable role to our nation. Its community remains steeped in history, which still plays a vital role today. Two of Texas' most treasured historic landmarks are in present-day La Porte, the Battleship Texas and the San Jacinto Monument. La Porte sits just eight miles from the San Jacinto Battleground, where Texas gained its independence from Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize and celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the City of La Porte. May God continue to bless La Porte in these next 125 years.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ANTONIO "TONY" ORENDAIN

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of civil rights leader Antonio "Tony" Orendain, who passed away on April 12, 2016.

Antonio was born on May 28, 1930, in Etzatlán, Mexico. At the age of 20, armed with little more than a sixth-grade education and an unwavering desire to succeed and sustain himself, he pursued a brighter future in the United States. Soon after arriving, he moved to Los Angeles where he worked in the fields of California and met César Chávez.

Inspired by the teachings of Chávez, Antonio became a lifelong activist, fighting to ensure that farm workers would one day be allowed to put a fair price on the sweat from their own brow. Antonio advocated for agricultural workers across the country, calling for higher wages and better working conditions. He later joined the Community Service Organization, a coalition dedicated to civil rights.

In the summer of 1969, Antonio and his family moved to the Rio Grande Valley. In 1975 he established the Texas Farm Workers Union, an organization dedicated to shortening the 14-hour workday and increasing wages for

farmworkers in South Texas. Antonio later led members of the local United Farm Workers Organizing Committee on a march to the middle of the Roma Bridge. The group straddled the international boundary chanting “Nosotros Venceremos.” We Shall Overcome, in support of their mission to improve the lives of agricultural laborers.

In February 1977, Antonio led a group of 40 farmworkers on a march for basic human rights from San Juan, Texas, to Austin, Texas, where they met with then-Governor Dolph Briscoe. The group traveled further north to Washington, D.C., where the march ended. By the time they reached the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, the group had grown to nearly 10,000 people.

For decades, Antonio fought to ensure that farmworkers would have “at least the basic necessities that the rest of society is used to.” Antonio will long be remembered for his commitment to safeguarding farmworkers’ rights and ending the exploitation of our nation’s vulnerability.

Mr. Speaker, today we honor a champion of civil rights and a defender of the vulnerable. While Antonio Orendain is no longer with us, his contributions and revolutionary ideals will continue to inspire us. It is a privilege to honor this South Texas champion of equality.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHANIE CARLSON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Stephanie Carlson for being named the 2017 Emerging Iowa Leader by the Iowa State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

The Emerging Iowa Leader Award recognizes alumni from the College who have taken leadership roles in advocating for and bettering agriculture and life sciences in Iowa. Stephanie is the producer outreach and federal policy director for the Iowa Pork Producers Association, where she interacts with people from industry leaders to the local producer. Wendy Wintersteen, the endowed dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, noted the “positive impact” Stephanie has also had on the college itself, “from sharing her expertise with classes and student organizations, to advocating and raising awareness for college priorities through the Curtiss League and the Grow Iowa Agriculture organization.”

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Stephanie Carlson on her recognition as the 2017 Emerging Iowa Leader, and I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Stephanie on her outstanding accomplishment.

HONORING CHIEF CHRIS PALMER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Chris Palmer.

Chief Chris Palmer was born to Carl Palmer and the late Classie Palmer. He is the fourth of six children. Chief Palmer is married to Kathy Robinson and they have five children and six grandchildren. He attended Crystal Springs High School and graduated from Jackson State University with a B.S. degree in Criminal Justice and Corrections.

Chief Palmer began his career with the Crystal Springs Police Department as a Dispatcher and became a Patrolman in 1994. During his tenure on patrol, Chief Palmer was contracted to the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics as an undercover agent.

Four years later, Chief Palmer became the investigator for the City of Crystal Springs. As investigator, Chief Palmer worked all felony cases in the city for the next 15 years. These cases included Murder, Aggravated Assault, and Burglary along with numerous white collar crimes. While investigating these crimes Chief Palmer worked over 175 cases per year with a solvability rate of 94.6 percent and a conviction rate of 99.7 percent.

In February, 2015, Chief Palmer was promoted from Investigator to Captain. After a brief stint as Captain, Chief Palmer was promoted to his current position as Chief in October, 2015. Chief Palmer has an excellent staff that includes fifteen (15) police officers, six (6) dispatchers, a Court Clerk and a Deputy Court Clerk. Chief Palmer works diligently each day to make sure all employees are updated with hourly classes to make them better Dispatchers, Court Clerks and Officers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Chief Chris Palmer for his dedication to serving our great state of Mississippi.

RECOGNIZING HINKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S “COINS FOR COPS, CHANGE DRIVE”

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it's my honor to recognize four, extraordinary students at Hinks Elementary School in Alpena, Michigan, for organizing the school's first “Coins for Cops, Change Drive.” The students, Lilly Gembel, Avery Dubey, Cecelia Magdaleno, and Abbey Ruby, designed the program to raise money for the Michigan State Fallen Trooper Fund, which supports the families of troopers who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

After hearing stories from her grandfather, retired-Sheriff Deputy Ken Gembel, Lilly Gembel recruited Avery, Cecelia, and Abbey to begin collecting money for the families of fallen troopers. Setting an initial goal of \$500, the students and their fellow classmates started asking friends and family for donations, and, after one month, the girls had doubled their goal by raising \$1,000. The students scheduled their fundraising efforts to coincide with the Michigan State Police's 100th Anniversary in April. The “Coins for Cops, Change Drive” culminated at Hinks Elementary where the students presented a check to Michigan State Police Alpena Post Commander Lt. John Grimshaw and Trooper Ashley Simpson.

Our men and women in uniform work each and every day to provide safety and security

in the communities where we live and work. Folks in the First District know how important it is to have a dedicated force working in some the most remote areas in Michigan, and for 100 years, the Michigan State Police have acted as role models for young people throughout the state. The students at Hinks Elementary School have displayed tremendous compassion and leadership in honoring our law enforcement professionals, and I am confident they will continue to achieve great things by applying this maturity.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Lilly Gembel, Avery Dubey, Cecelia Magdaleno, and Abbey Ruby for their work in gathering support among their classmates to raise \$1,000 for the families of Michigan's fallen troopers. Michiganders can take great pride in knowing that Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula have such bright students with drive and passion that will allow them to do great things in whatever path they choose to follow. On behalf of my constituents across the First District, I wish to thank Lilly, Avery, Cecelia, Abbey, and their classmates at Hinks Elementary School for their selfless work in organizing the “Coins for Cops, Change Drive.”

NATIONAL DIPG AWARENESS DAY

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support H. Res. 69, the National DIPG Awareness Resolution, in honor of Julia Barbara Psar—one of my constituents who passed away from Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG) on May 17, 2016.

DIPG is the deadliest type of pediatric brain tumors. According to the CDC, brain tumors are the leading cause of childhood cancer death, and DIPG is the second most common malignant brain tumor found in children. DIPG has a less than 1 percent survival rate, and most children die within nine months after being diagnosed.

This little girl—Julia Barbara Psar—died just before her third birthday. I have always read and heard that the worst thing in the world is to outlive one of your own children, and I have no doubt this is true. I have met with my constituents Mr. and Mrs. Psar, and I do not believe someone can ever have closure after a loss like theirs. Words cannot express how heartbreaking this tragedy is.

Our children urgently need us to find a cure for DIPG. Today, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 69, establishing May 17th as National DIPG Awareness Day in hopes of curing the deadliest type of pediatric brain tumors.

INTRODUCTION OF PRIVATE STUDENT LOAN BANKRUPTCY FAIRNESS ACT

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Private Student Loan Bankruptcy Fairness Act, a bill I introduced earlier

today with my colleagues DANNY DAVIS and ERIC SWALWELL which would restore fairness in student lending by treating privately issued student loans in bankruptcy the same as other types of private debt.

Graduation season is a time for joy, but increasingly that joy is tempered with worry about student debt.

It is sad enough that our children are increasingly burdened by a crushing weight of student debt. But the fact that students under the weight of this debt are treated so unfairly in bankruptcy is unconscionable.

Before 2005, private student loans issued by for-profit lenders were treated in bankruptcy like most other unsecured consumer debt, such as credit card debt. Our bill will ensure that privately issued student loans will once again be treated like other consumer debt and be dischargeable in bankruptcy.

Private student loans have much in common with credit cards and subprime mortgages. For example, private student loans often have onerous interest rates with no caps and can include exorbitant fees and hidden charges. In addition, many lenders have used aggressive marketing and high-pressure sales tactics to target particularly vulnerable people, namely, young men and women without financial experience, and older Americans seeking to restart their careers by pursuing higher education and training.

The harmful features of many private student loans have resulted in a substantial rise in the number of delinquencies.

To make matters worse, private student loans lack the critical consumer protections that come with federal student loans. For instance, private lenders are not required to—and typically do not—provide any of the deferments, income-based repayment plans, cancellation rights, or loan forgiveness programs that are available to federal student loan borrowers.

A hallmark of our Nation's bankruptcy law is to give an honest but unfortunate debtor a chance to obtain meaningful relief. To that end, the law exempts very few types of debt from elimination through the bankruptcy process, and only for principled policy reasons, such as debts for child support, taxes, criminal fines and intentional injury.

In 2005, however, Congress changed the bankruptcy law without any substantive analysis so that student loans made by private, for-profit lenders became very difficult to discharge in bankruptcy.

Currently, the Bankruptcy Code prohibits the discharge of private educational debt unless the debtor, in addition to meeting the already stringent requirements for personal bankruptcy, proves that repayment would impose an, "undue hardship," on the debtor and the debtor's dependents. In practice, however, it's hard for a debtor to ever successfully meet this standard.

The current bankruptcy law unjustly punishes hardworking Americans who are simply trying to improve their lives by pursuing a higher education and became victims of predatory private student loan lenders.

We can do better.

I urge my colleagues to support the Private Student Loan Bankruptcy Fairness Act.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ALAN ROBINSON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. Alan Robinson of Atlantic, Iowa, for receiving the Hall of Fame Award sponsored by the Cass County Cattleman's Association.

Dr. Robinson graduated from Iowa State University in 1977 with a degree in veterinarian medicine. His career began with a successful veterinarian practice, but then an opportunity arose to start raising cattle. He continued to assist local veterinarians, even as his cattle operation continued to grow, to keep his hands in animal medicine.

His farm operation focuses on raising corn, soybeans, and feeder cattle. He said it is important to be progressive in your thinking with all the changes in farming over the past twenty years. After receiving this award, Dr. Robinson said he was "humbled" to receive it and that he is honored to know people in the business respect his contributions to the industry.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Dr. Robinson for earning this outstanding award. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him for his many accomplishments in the agriculture industry and in wishing him nothing but continued success in all his endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE A.L. BROWN HIGH SCHOOL ROBOTICS TEAM

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the A.L. Brown High School Robotics team for their victory in the 2017 North Carolina Beta Club's Robotics competition state championship. This year, the team of Jason Chamnangam, Marco Gonzalez, Jackson Holsclaw, Jack Parker, Jesse Peterson, and Randon Phillips captured the top prize after besting eight other high school teams in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Beta Club conducts competitions like this every year at their state convention. However, this was the first year the Beta Club added a robotics event to its yearly contests. The robotics championship pits North Carolina high school students against each other to test skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). After months of work and preparation, the A.L. Brown students took home the grand prize.

This year's event brought a host of talent and I am extremely proud of all of the students who participated. I am also thankful for the teachers and volunteers who made the event possible. I look forward to many more years of a successful competition and wish all the students well as they continue their academic pursuits.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating the A.L. Brown High School Robotics team on their state championship.

RECOGNIZING FIRE CHIEF DIANA J. MATTY

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Diana J. Matty, who will become the first woman Fire Chief of West Palm Beach when she is sworn in on Monday.

Since joining the department in 1994 at the age of 18, Diana has risen through the ranks and held almost every position from firefighter to assistant fire chief. She is a decorated fire officer with multiple Firefighter of the Year awards to her name, and has traveled the nation as a hazmat instructor. Her promotion to Fire Chief marks the achievement of a career-long goal, and one that is unquestionably deserved.

I have known Diana since my time as the Mayor of West Palm Beach and I am thrilled to see such a well-deserving firefighter serve in this position.

Diana is a great role model for any aspiring firefighter, and I am pleased to honor her today and wish her the best of luck as West Palm Beach's new Fire Chief.

THE SOUTH CAROLINA PEANUT PARITY ACT

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in the 2002 Farm Bill, the U.S. Department of Agriculture established the Peanut Standards Board, a board that advises the Secretary of Agriculture and Department on peanut quality and handling standards. By law, members of the Peanut Standards Board must be from a state in one of the three designated regions. South Carolina was not represented, leaving the state's peanut farmers without a voice, despite being the nation's fourth largest peanut-producing state and producing over eight percent of the nation's peanuts.

Peanuts are appreciated in South Carolina where every August the Pelion Peanut Party at Pelion in Lexington County is a highlight of the summer. Additionally, the General Assembly has legislated the beloved boiled peanut as the official State snack.

Today, I am grateful to introduce the South Carolina Peanut Parity Act, legislation that will grant peanut producers the opportunity to represent South Carolina's agricultural community on the Peanut Standards Board.

I appreciate the support of the South Carolina Farm Bureau, led by President Harry Ott, for this legislation, and am grateful that the entire South Carolina delegation joins me in introducing the South Carolina Peanut Parity Act.

In conclusion, God Bless Our Troops and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROGELIO
BOTELLO RIOS

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of beloved Rio Grande Valley radio and television host Rogelio Botello Rios, who passed away on Wednesday, May 3, 2017.

Rogelio began his broadcasting career in 1961 at the radio station X.E.Z.D. in Camargo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Six years later he joined the staff at KGBT Radio in Harlingen, Texas, and in 1971 he was promoted to Program Director. He then served as Program Director for KIIWW radio for eight years. South Texans remember him most for his local variety show "Aqui Rogelio," which he hosted from 1968 to 2005.

Over the course of his career, Rogelio received numerous awards and accolades for his prolific work and efforts to promote the genre. Radio and Music Magazine named him Program Director of the Year and Billboard Magazine nominated him for the same honor. Rogelio was also inducted into the Tejano Hall of Fame and the Conjunto Hall of Fame in 1999 and 2011 respectively.

Rogelio will always be remembered for his loyalty to his family, work, and to the Rio Grande Valley. As a broadcaster, he dedicated much of his time promoting smaller, independent artists and helping them to gain more widespread recognition. Rogelio's colleagues held him in high regard as a consummate professional who valued high standards and punctuality.

Mr. Speaker, South Texas lost a broadcasting pioneer and legend in Rogelio Botello Rios this month. He will be sincerely missed by his family, friends, and his many fans in South Texas and Northern Mexico.

RECOGNIZING HERNANDO COUNTY
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Hernando County Sheriff Al Nienhuis, City of Brooksville Police Chief George Turner, and the law enforcement officers who keep Hernando County safe every single day.

This week marks the annual observance of Police Week. Though we set aside one week a year to honor law enforcement, I encourage all Americans to join me not only this week, but every day, in recognizing the honor, courage, and commitment of America's law enforcement.

Our law enforcement officers are heroes in the community. They keep us safe, and are willing to put their lives on the line every day in the course of their duties. It is impossible to fully express our gratitude or adequately recognize the professionalism of the men and women who voluntarily put their lives on the line for our safety and security. It is with deep respect that we pause today to honor the

memory of the heroes who gave the last full measure of devotion and made the ultimate sacrifice.

I want to extend my sincere appreciation to Hernando County Sheriff Al Nienhuis, City of Brooksville Police Chief George Turner, and the law enforcement officers who bravely and selflessly serve Hernando County. It is an honor to recognize them and all men and women in law enforcement.

RECOGNIZING THE EMMETT TILL
MEMORIAL COMMISSION

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Emmett Till Memorial Commission based in Tallahatchie County of the Second Congressional District of Mississippi.

In 2006, the Tallahatchie County Board of Supervisors formed the Emmett Till Memorial Commission and charged them with the development and oversight of the Emmett Till Memorial Site. The site is a memorial to the memory of Mr. Emmett Louis Till, a 14-year old African American teenager who was brutally murdered in Mississippi and whose murderers were never brought to justice. The site also fosters racial reconciliation efforts and restorative justice programs. The Commission's mission statement is to remember, preserve, and educate the public about the history, stories and cultural legacy of the Civil Rights Movement of Tallahatchie County and other vital sites along the Emmett Till trail and their lasting effects on the County, State and the Nation. The Emmett Till Memorial Commission is comprised of 18 members and is multiracial in makeup.

In 2007 they began efforts to restore the Tallahatchie County Second District Courthouse to its 1955 character, where the trial of Mr. J.W. Milam and Mr. Roy Bryant, the two murderers of Emmett Till, took place despite a not-guilty verdict. On October 2, 2007, the project was officially launched with a racial healing ceremony organized by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi.

Over 400 people attended including members of the Till family. Following the ceremony, a bus tour was conducted of the sites significant to the Emmett Till story. In 2012 funding was secured and the work began to establish the Emmett Till Interpretive Center on the square directly across from the entrance to the Tallahatchie Courthouse.

On March 21st, 2015 the courthouse reopened after an extensive restoration process. The restoration of the courthouse helped solidify the apology that the community wrote in 2007 that began by saying "We the citizens of Tallahatchie County believe that Racial Reconciliation begins by telling the truth." The courthouse and the Emmett Till Interpretive Center memorialize not only the murder and injustice, but of the brave actions of Mrs. Mamie Till, Mr. Mose Wright and others who forced the nation to acknowledge the racial injustices of the era. The restoration of the courthouse and the opening of the Emmett Till Interpretive Center could not have happened

without the local leadership of the Emmett Till Memorial Commission of Tallahatchie County.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Emmett Till Memorial Commission located in Tallahatchie County, MS inside of the Second Congressional District of Mississippi.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT NICK
PHILLIPS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Nick Phillips of Riverton, Iowa, for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Nick is a member of Boy Scout Troop 218 in Shenandoah.

The Eagle Scout designation is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Approximately five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained over the past century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Nick's Eagle Project revolved around restoring portions of the Riverton City Park. He installed various landscape blocks around three separate sides of the recently-constructed restrooms with the purpose of reducing the erosion from rain water running off the roof and to put the finishing touches on the new facilities. The work ethic Nick has displayed in his Eagle Project, and every other project leading to his Eagle Scout rank, speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Nick and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
SALLY BLAUVELT

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor an outstanding public servant, federal employee, and advocate in Maine's 1st District upon her retirement. After many years of service in the Washington headquarters of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Sally Blauvelt came to Maine six years ago to become the Field Office Director for USCIS.

Sally has been instrumental in creating relationships with stakeholders serving the immigrant community in Maine. She has embodied

the principles of common good, service to others, and social equity, engendering a respectful and customer-service focused environment in the local field office. And she has mentored a committed team of individuals who understand the challenges and hopes of those needing help and information, seeking to be of service whenever possible. Without fail, visitors to the USCIS office in my district are treated with dignity and respect.

Sally Blauvelt understands that the arrival of new Mainers from across the globe adds diversity, vitality, and energy to communities across my state. I am sincerely grateful for her many contributions to my constituents, to Maine, and to our nation.

My state has been all the better for Sally Blauvelt's decision to make Maine her home, and it is my honor to represent her in the U.S. Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, circumstances have arisen which have caused me to return home to my district early this week. However, had I been present, I would have voted: yea on Roll Call No. 258; yea on Roll Call No. 259; yea on Roll Call No. 260; yea on Roll Call No. 261; and yea on Roll Call No. 262.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. FRANK GORNICK

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Mr. Frank Gornick for twenty three years of dedicated service as Chancellor of the West Hills Community College District.

A Chicago native, Mr. Gornick moved to Coalinga, California to play football for West Hills Community College. He earned an Associates Degree at West Hills College, Coalinga in 1966 and went on to study at California State University, Sacramento, where he met his wife, Gloria and the couple married on June 1, 1968. Shortly after, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1971 and later pursued higher education at St. Louis University, graduating with a Doctorate of Philosophy in 1979.

In 1971, Frank began his career in education at Howard County Community College in Columbia, Maryland, where he taught Psychology and Human Development courses. From 1972 to 1975, Frank held the position of Director of Financial Aid and Placement at Richland College in Dallas, Texas. In 1975, he began his nine year career at Belleville Area College in Illinois, where he served as Provost of the Granite City Center. Frank left his position as Provost in 1984 and returned to California, where he dedicated nine years to Bakersfield College as Dean of Student Services.

Mr. Frank Gornick was welcomed back to West Hills Community College District in 1994 as Superintendent and President. During this

time, Mr. Gornick provided oversight to the process for West Hills College Lemoore, which at the time was one of California's newest community colleges. Frank is responsible for a successful federal bond which generated \$38 million in local property taxes and state dollars for the renovation and construction of the Coalinga and Lemoore campuses. In 2001, he was promoted to Chancellor and has held the position for the past sixteen years.

During his tenure at West Hills College District, Mr. Gornick led many efforts resulting in renovation and construction of the campus. In 2004, Frank was recognized for his outstanding efforts and awarded the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Diversity Award for Education.

As Chancellor, Mr. Gornick has developed a transition for multi-college system, centralizing services to the colleges and eliminating duplication, and has made a significant investment in developing a philanthropic vision for the West Hills Community College Foundation.

Outside of work, Frank enjoys spending time with his wife, Gloria, his three children, Frank, Victoria, and Christina, and his granddaughter, Isabella. In his retirement, Frank is looking forward to many road trips with his family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join us in commending Mr. Frank Gornick on the eve of his retirement for his service to the people of the Central Valley and wishing him well as he embarks on the next chapter of his life.

HONORING PASTOR CASEY D. FISHER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a God-fearing and impressionistic man, Pastor Casey D. Fisher. Pastor Fisher has shown what can be done through tenacity, dedication and a desire to serve God.

A Spirit-fed and Spirit-led minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Pastor Casey D. Fisher was born in Utica, Mississippi, on July 8, 1966. He is the son of Sharkey and Katie Fisher. He received his formal education from the Hinds County School system and graduated from Utica High School in 1984. He attended the University of Southern Mississippi, where he majored in Business Administration. He later received a Bachelor in Religious Education, a Masters of Divinity and a Doctorate of Ministry from Living Word Bible Institution in Tyler, Texas.

Pastor Fisher is married to the former Michele Chambers. They were married on September 17, 1988. He is the father of three lovely children: twin sons, Bryan and Ryan and a daughter, Casey Michele. Pastor Fisher finds time to love and care for his family as Christ does the church. He is devoted to strengthening them and helping them to grow in their everyday walk with the Lord, just as he does with the church.

Pastor Fisher has served his country as a soldier in the United States Army. During this time, he truly accepted Jesus Christ as his

personal savior on October 23, 1993 in Livorno, Italy. He served eight years in the U.S. Army, where he was part of two tours in Southwest Asia. He departed military service in July 1997. Afterwards, he was employed with the U.S. Postal service in Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he recently retired in December, 2010.

He is currently a Life Member of the Vicksburg Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and serves as the Guide Right Chairman. His purpose is Achievement, in which he mentors young men, twelve through eighteen years of age, providing them with tutoring, community involvement and religious principles. He is also a member of Masonic Order of Prince Hall Free and Accepted Mason.

In 1984, Pastor Fisher became the first known athlete in Mississippi to be selected All-State in four sports. While attending University of Southern Mississippi, he was member of the basketball team, in which he led the Golden Eagles to the NIT championship in 1987 and later was inducted into the USM hall of fame. Although he loves basketball, he also has a passion for golfing! Dr. Fisher is a die-hard fan of the Los Angeles Lakers and the Dallas Cowboys.

Pastor Fisher's motto is "If you don't take it personal, it will make you a better person". He is inspired by one of the Greatest Ministers, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., because of his willingness to serve and his willingness to give up his life for humanity. Greater Grove Street M. B. Church has stood the test of time through dedication, faith, stewardship, and commitment from this soldier on the battlefield for the Lord. He is a man of integrity, loyalty, dignity, and honesty leading his people to do the will of God.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor Casey D. Fisher for his dedication to God, family, community and country.

TRIBUTE TO DON SANDOR

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Don Sandor ahead of his retirement as City Administrator of Pleasant Hill, Iowa, on June 30th, 2017.

Don has spent 35 years in city administration. After administration jobs in Oskaloosa and other cities in Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Iowa, Don came to Pleasant Hill in 2007. Even though he arrived at the start of a recession and in the midst of some controversy with previous projects, Don's stability and guidance helped him to eventually bring in more development and projects to grow the community. During his time as city administrator, the population of Pleasant Hill has grown by 20 percent, and the taxable valuation of properties has increased by 93 percent. Throughout the almost 10 years he has dedicated to his job, Don helped to ensure that Pleasant Hill is one of the places people look to for doing business, living, and raising their families.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Don on his retirement and his exemplary work as City Administrator. I ask that my colleagues in the

United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on a successful career and in wishing him nothing but the best in his retirement.

COMMEMORATING PHYLLIS
SCHLAFLY AND HER WORK ON
BEHALF OF INVENTORS AND
THE U.S. PATENT SYSTEM

HON. DAVE BRAT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate an outstanding conservative leader with whom I had the privilege of working with and learning from over my political career: Phyllis Schlafly. Her efforts advocating for America's inventors and the patent system that protects their inventions will be highlighted at an upcoming event of the Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund entitled "Phyllis Schlafly: Celebrating an Untiring Advocate of Inventors and the Economic Freedom to Invent." Therefore, I wish to add a word commemorating the contribution of this bold patriot who was an indispensable force to our great nation's success.

America has long been a haven for innovations in the marketplace. Through the years, American inventors have looked to Article I, Section 8 of our U.S. Constitution and its power vested in Congress to protect creators' "exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries." As a result, America has held the distinction of being a global leader in cutting-edge innovations and novel inventions.

Phyllis Schlafly recognized this vital part of our free enterprise system and was a strong voice on behalf of American inventors. She was quick to praise the American patent system, which was unique when the Founding Fathers put it into the U.S. Constitution and is still unique today. She decried other nations that advance themselves by stealing American designs while clutching to inferior patent systems that punish inventors and stymie progress.

Phyllis Schlafly understood that the superiority of American ingenuity is not a matter of happenstance, but the product of a bold and inspired precedent set by our Founding Fathers and enshrined in our Constitution. Only through patent protection, the right to private property, and the free market can America motivate inventors to stretch the boundaries of what is possible and create the products that increase productivity, save time, and save lives every day. From the traffic light and GPS navigation, to the microwave oven and the Internet, every American has benefitted from our unique patent system.

For more than seventy years, Phyllis Schlafly was a tireless advocate for our patent system. I am proud to honor her and the many inventors she fought to protect.

IN RECOGNITION OF SARA
ABLARD

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to use this time to recognize an outstanding constituent in Virginia's 10th District, Sara Ablard, who has had an incredible impact on increasing awareness for children with cleft palates and cleft lips. Working closely with the Smile Train, an organization that helps cover the \$250 surgery for infants with the birth defect known as cleft lip or cleft palate, Ms. Ablard founded the Sadie's Smile Foundation in honor of her daughter Sadie who passed away six years ago during a roller skating accident.

Ms. Ablard always remembers Sadie's beautiful smile and her compassion for other children. One day while walking through Dulles Town Center, Sadie saw a poster of a boy with a cleft palate and was intrigued and curious as to how she might be able to help him and others. That Christmas, Sadie and Ms. Ablard asked for donations instead of presents, and they were able to raise \$500, which fully funded two surgeries for infants with cleft palates and lips.

Sadie truly wanted to give others the chance to smile, as she once did so brightly and proudly, and when she passed away, Ms. Ablard made it her life goal to preserve Sadie's legacy through helping others. She started the Sadie's Smile Foundation, which, this year, is hosting its 6th Annual 5K & Kids Fun Run for Smile Train, with the goal of raising \$478,250, signifying \$250 for each day her daughter was alive and smiling. The 5K and Fun Run not only increase awareness and raise money for the Smile Train organization, but the event also helps us all remember Sadie and bring the community together.

Mr. Speaker, I now ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Sara Ablard's heroic actions and the memory of her beloved daughter, Sadie. Individuals, like Sara, who overcome terrible tragedies in their own lives and go on to help others, truly make me proud to serve Virginia's 10th District, and today, we honor and celebrate her contributions to our community and to those less fortunate. I wish Sara all the best in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING SPECIALIST JAMES
STEVENS' SERVICE

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to honor Specialist James Stevens as he selflessly defended our nation.

A native of Knoxville, Iowa, Specialist Stevens grew up playing with "GI Joe" action figures and watching war movies, dreaming that one day he too would become a soldier. In 2010, James enlisted in the U.S. Army and then graduated from Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, achieving his childhood dream. During his time at Infantry School, James learned how to defend this nation and

the importance of brotherhood. Two years later, Specialist Stevens deployed to Afghanistan where he was stationed at Combat Outpost Zerok. In support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Specialist Stevens and his infantry unit were responsible for guard duty and combat patrols. Stevens' valor and leadership led him to serve as a decorated hero receiving the Afghanistan Campaign medal with Campaign Star, Army Commendation Medal, NATO Medal, and the Combat Infantryman's badge.

Currently a veteran, Stevens continues to serve members of his community in East Peoria, Illinois. As a proud father, he raises his two girls, Kirstin and Madison, and teaches his daughters the same lessons learned while serving aside his Army brothers at Fort Riley: loyalty, duty, respect, and honor. In addition, Stevens volunteers with the Habitat for Humanity Greater Peoria Area where communities come together to build homes for veterans and military families.

Specialist James Stevens is an American hero, who has dutifully served his nation and continues to proudly serve his family and community. Thanks to Specialist Stevens for his service and sacrifice. This country is blessed to have servicemen, like James Stevens, who selflessly devoted their careers to protecting this country. We owe him a debt that can never be repaid.

HONORING THE TOUGALOO COLLEGE/DELTA HEALTHPARTNERS
HEALTHY START INITIATIVE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public health program designed to reduce infant mortality in the Mississippi Delta, the Tougaloo College/Delta HealthPartners Healthy Start Initiative.

This initiative is one of the 100 Healthy Start Initiatives throughout the nation working endlessly to give every child a healthy start in life. The Delta HealthPartners' Healthy Start program is housed under the auspices of Tougaloo College within the George A. and Ruth B. Owens Health and Wellness Center, under the direction of Dr. Sandra Carr Hayes, the executive director. The program serves a rural population in a seven county area in the Mississippi Delta (Tunica, Coahoma, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Sunflower, Bolivar, and Washington counties). These counties are among the poorest and most medically underserved in Mississippi and the nation.

The Healthy Start Initiative was implemented in 1999 with funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration under the leadership of Dr. Beverly W. Hogan, who now serves as President of Tougaloo College. Today, Ms. Arletha Howard serves as the project director. Ms. Howard is a registered nurse with over 28 years of experience in oncology, burn trauma, intensive care unit, pediatrics, home health, maternal and child health. She has worked with the Healthy Start Initiative for 16 years. In 2014, under Mrs. Howard's leadership, the Healthy Start Initiative was upgraded from a Level I individual based program to a Level II community based program.

Since its inception, the Healthy Start Initiative has provided case management services through a home visiting model to: (1) high-risk pregnant women of childbearing age 10–44 years, (2) their infants; and (3) fathers/co-parents.

Over the past 16 years, the program has achieved several major accomplishments: The Healthy Start Initiative has case managed over 900 mothers and infants just this past calendar year (January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015).

The Healthy Start Initiative has created the Coahoma County Community Action Network is responsible for opening the first Diaper Bank in the state of Mississippi funded by charitable donations and Northwest Mississippi Foundation.

The Healthy Start Initiative serves as the lead agency in partnership with the Mississippi State Department of Health in the Mississippi Delta Regional Fetal Infant Mortality Review program.

The Healthy Start Initiative has created Memorandums of Understandings (MOU) with 22 partnering schools in the Mississippi Delta to provide peer support groups to pregnant/parenting teens and co parents.

The Healthy Start Initiative has been featured in numerous publications and articles (USA Today, Hechinger Report, Huffington Post, Clarksdale Press Register, Tunica Times, and WABG TV Interview) highlighting the comprehensive services of the project.

The Healthy Start Initiative has partnered with Parents for Public Schools to provide trainings for project parents on advocacy skills and educating and mobilizing parents to strengthen public schools.

The Healthy Start Initiative promotes breastfeeding in two (2) clinic sites by providing health education by project's Certified Lactation Counselors (Women's Clinic—Clarksdale, MS and Gamble Clinic—Greenville, MS).

The Healthy Start Initiative hosts a Community Baby Shower in partnership with local hospitals, Federally Qualified Community Health Centers (FQHC), other health care providers and key stakeholders each year in September to promote awareness of infant mortality during National Infant Mortality Awareness Month.

The Healthy Start Initiative has implemented a male outreach initiative to address parenting issues among male co-parents and hosts an Annual 5k Walk in June to promote Men's Health Awareness.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing The Tougaloo College Delta HealthPartners Healthy Start Initiative for its continued efforts to reduce infant mortality in the Mississippi Delta.

TRIBUTE TO LYNN UBBEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Perry Community Schools Superintendent Lynn Ubben upon her retirement at the end of the 2016–2017 school year.

Lynn has been in education for 41 years, starting as a Special Education Teacher at

Fredericksburg Community School in 1976. Lynn taught as she continued her own education. She completed her Masters of Arts in Elementary Special Education at Northwest Missouri State University in 1998 and later her Certificate of Advanced Studies in Education Administration and her Principal Endorsement at Iowa State University. After serving as a principal and a superintendent at other Iowa schools, Lynn came to Perry to serve as Superintendent in 2009 when she saw just how much the school board cared about the kids. And to Lynn, that is what it is about—the kids. She strives to build those close-knit relationships with her students, whether it's in the hallways of the school, or cheering from the stands at a sporting event or other extra-curricular activity. While she may be retiring and spending more time with her family, there is no doubt that Lynn will still be there cheering on “her kids.”

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Lynn for her 41 years as an educator, and I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating her on a successful career and in wishing her nothing but the best in her retirement.

RECOGNITION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH (CENTRALIA)

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. McEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, historic First Baptist Church (Centralia)—originally known as Salem African Baptist—was established in 1867, in Centralia, Virginia by freedmen from Salem Baptist Church. The mother Church is located two miles west of this site—on a hill by the railroad near the intersection of Centralia and Chester Roads.

Members of the first Board of Trustees—Daniel Wilkerson, Wilson Lewis, Lemuel Dodson, James White, and Emanuel Johnson—received the deed of trust for this plot of land from Mr. & Mrs. P. A. Chalkley of Salem Baptist. Mr. Ben Duval, also from Salem Baptist, donated lumber for the Church. Prior to the erection of the first modest sanctuary in 1867, the first worship services were held in a brush arbor at this sacred site.

Between 1867 and 1949, the Church prospered under the leadership of eleven pastors including Reverend Lewis Branch who was the first, Reverends Ned Bland; Eli Saunders; J. E. Brown; T. H. Johnson (1897 to 1906); William Thomas (1906 to 1915); H. M. Chapman (1915 to 1919); J. H. Binford (1919 to 1929); C. A. Cobbs (1929 to 1931); C. J. Washington (1932 to 1934); and W. B. Ball (1934 to 1949).

In the early 1900's during the pastorates of Reverend T.H. Johnson and J.H. Binford, the second edifice was erected and renovated into the edifice of historic and architectural significance for which it is renowned: Historic First Baptist (Centralia).

Per O'Dell (1983; pp. 346 and 356), “Another church departing somewhat from the standard plan is . . . First Baptist Church of Centralia, erected by a black congregation in the 1910s.” Known for its twin towers, and architectural elements that included Gothic Revival, Colonial Revival, and Shingle styles, the edifice was according to O'Dell, “larger than

any in the county at the time . . .” Also, the exterior decoration was reported to be “more elaborate than that on most rural churches of the period.”

Needing more space for a growing discipleship, in 1963 under the leadership of Dr. Samuel Moss Carter, the twelfth pastor who served for forty years (1950 to 1990), First Baptist (Centralia) moved to its current edifice at 2920 Kingsdale Road—two miles northeast of the historic site at 4412 Centralia Road, Chester, VA.

On April 16, 1996, Historic First Baptist Church (Centralia) was razed by arson. Led by Divine intervention and forgiveness of the arsonists, the current and thirteenth pastor—Dr. Wilson E.B. Shannon (who was installed in 1991) and the congregation that included professionals with architectural drafting, brick masonry, plastering, and contracting—reconstructed Historic First Baptist (Centralia) to authentic specifications within one year (1997) of her being destroyed.

In July 2012, following an historic exposé designed for the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia (CHSVA), First Baptist Church (Centralia): Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow (at which time, CHSVA recognized her historic and architectural significance), the Church was invited to apply for Chesterfield Historic Landmark status.

Designated as a Chesterfield County (VA) Historic Landmark in June 2014, the Church was also granted one of the highly coveted Virginia Historical Highway Markers by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in December 2014. The marker was installed in November 2015 at a grand ceremony marking this epic achievement. While First Baptist (Centralia) is the third church in Chesterfield to earn distinction as an historic landmark, First Baptist (Centralia) is the first African American Church in Chesterfield to earn this distinction.

To further address family-life ministry and community needs, the shared vision of disciples and Dr. Shannon and First Lady Cynthia Smith Shannon—who just celebrated their 26th anniversary at First Baptist—includes expansion of the Samuel Moss Carter Family Life Center to a 45,000 square ft. edifice encompassing banquet facilities for 750 occupants, an indoor Olympic sized swimming pool, and other amenities supportive of family life ministry.

First Baptist Church (Centralia) has been blessed over the last 150 years to have been a spiritual beacon for her members, the Church community and beyond—supporting them through the challenges of independence, the Great Depression, societal changes, physical growth, world wars, arson, and familial joys and sorrows. She welcomes the next 150 years—Magnifying God's Word, Blessing His Name, and Aspiring to Exalt His Kingdom on Earth.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JOSEPH RAY PERRY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and memory of Joseph Ray Perry, a beloved Texan, World

War II veteran, and father of Secretary of Energy Rick Perry. Ray passed away on April 27, 2017, at the age of 92.

Ray was a man of faith and country. In 1943, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, and over the next two years flew 35 combat missions as a tail gunner for the B17 bomber, *Heavy Date*. He was the last surviving member of the plane's crew. By the time he left the service in 1945, Ray had earned numerous awards, including the Air Medal, World War II Victory badge, Sharpshooters badge, and the Aerial Gunnery badge. Mr. Perry was part of the greatest generation who answered the call of duty and defended our flag during a time of considerable need. The legacy of the greatest generation will stand the test of time as it helped shape the freedoms we enjoy today. He was a west Texas farmer at heart and the Lone Star State was lucky to have him.

After the war, Ray moved back to Texas and operated a farm near rural Paint Creek, a small town just north of Abilene. He was an active member of his community, a loving husband, a dedicated father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Ray was a quiet but influential man and a strong moral compass for all that knew him. He was elected Haskell County Precinct 3 commissioner in 1968, a position he held for nearly three decades. Mr. Perry also served on the Paint Creek school board for 10 years and on the West Texas Council of Governments for 6 years, during which time he helped organize the Paint Creek Water Supply Corp.

While we mourn the loss of Ray, we are grateful for his example of a life well lived, guided by the values of family and service.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Joseph Ray Perry. I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Ray and in sending their thoughts and prayers to the Perry family.

TRIBUTE TO C.L. TRAMMELL

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Mr. C.L. Trammell was a high school teacher and coach in my hometown of Knoxville, Tennessee for over 30 years.

When he was a boy, he always wanted to make it big as a baseball player, but had a different destiny instead.

He became the father of Bubba Trammell, a star Major League Baseball player for several major league teams.

Mr. C.L. Trammell is retired from teaching now, but is still very active.

Among his hobbies is the writing of poetry. One day he shared with me a poem he wrote about America's Pastime that I thoroughly enjoyed.

I include in the RECORD this poem Mr. Trammell wrote that is his personal favorite among his collection.

FORGOTTEN DREAMS: BY C.L. TRAMMELL

The wooden stands beside the fence
Are deathly quiet today
There's no one out there on the field
Where team mates used to play
The barren spot in the center field
Has all grown up in grass

And no one's down the third base line
Where players used to pass
The neighborhood where we were young
So sacred to us then
Forgotten now and growing old
Deserted by her friends
And flashing thoughts upon my mind
Of happenings long gone
Of growing up and learning there
Beliefs of right and wrong
The things we did within our youth
Important yesterday
Have somehow died or disappeared
Somewhere along the way
And funny how the time does fly
To me at least it seems
Buy years somehow just pass on by
When you forget your dreams

TRIBUTE TO BRAD BAKER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Brad Baker of Creston, Iowa, for being inducted into the Iowa High School Athletic Association Officials Hall of Fame.

This award was presented to Brad by the Iowa High School Athletic Association on March 10th, during the Boy's State Basketball Tournament. Brad started officiating in the late 1980s after taking a class at Southwestern Community College. Since then, he has been active as a basketball and football official.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Brad embodies the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent him, and Iowans like him, in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Brad for his achievement and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

HONORING YALE CANTOR'S LIFETIME OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Yale Cantor from Ellington, Connecticut for his lifetime of public service, and I enthusiastically endorse his enshrinement on the Ellington Wall of Honor.

Yale has been on Ellington's Democratic Town Committee for over 60 years, and has served as a mentor to generations of residents who have sought to become involved in local government. His decorated career includes more than a decade as Democratic Town Chairman, being named a Justice of the Peace, a year on the Board of Selectmen, membership and chairmanship of the Human Service Commission, and more than 20 years on the Hockanum Valley Community Council, where he also served as president. In the town of Ellington, Yale is always ready to get involved in improving the community, and he created a large local footprint and legacy due to his efforts. Yale also had a long record of service as a teacher, and improving quality and access of education at all levels is one of his abiding passions.

During his years of service, Yale had a major personal hand in launching the campaigns of many distinguished public officials from the state of Connecticut, including my predecessor Sam Gejdenson, who served 20 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. I too can attest to Yale's political legacy. When I began my political career as a candidate for state representative in the town of Vernon in 1986, Yale was right there to give me wise counsel and support. In every campaign since for the General Assembly, Lieutenant Governor and U.S. Congress, Yale has always been there, loyally supporting my efforts. He is a true blue friend and a passionate advocate for democracy, fairness and civility. Those qualities are exactly what our nation needs today.

I would ask the chamber to please join me in congratulating Yale and his family for all they have done in Ellington, Connecticut and the nation over the years.

RECOGNIZING COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH AND THE SARATOGA COUNTY ECONOMIC OPPOR- TUNITY COUNCIL

HON. ELISE M. STEFANK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Ms. STEFANK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council as they participate in Community Action Month.

With the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964, Congress made way for the establishment of Community Action Agencies. These groups are typically comprised of local business and community leaders, who work as part of a statewide network to provide essential services for the impoverished in their communities.

For over 40 years, the Saratoga Economic Opportunity Council has been working as the designated Community Action Agency for their region. This organization works to help their neighbors by supporting a variety of initiatives, including Head Start and the Community Lunch Program. Through these efforts, the Saratoga EOC has helped to improve thousands of lives, making their community a better place for everyone in the process.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I would like to recognize the Saratoga Economic Opportunity Council for their legacy of public service. We are proud of their dedication to helping the Saratoga community, and thank them for their tireless efforts.

HONORING THE GOOD NEIGHBOR HEALTH CLINIC

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I wish to honor the good work of over twenty-five years of the Good Neighbor Health Clinic in White River Junction. Our community faces the challenge of providing healthcare to folks who don't have it. The Good Neighbor Health Clinic was

founded in 1992. It was the inspiration of two dedicated doctors, Paul Manganiello and Peter Mason, who asked in 1991, "What kind of healthcare do the homeless have?" The answer was: "None." Those doctors set out to work with other physicians and healthcare professionals to change that by creating a clinic with volunteer staff to deliver services to people without any ability to pay for care. Later, they were joined by dentist Robert Keene, and the Red Logan Dental Clinic was added.

For over twenty five years, the Good Neighbor Health Clinics have managed to provide fine, professional primary care to people in our community who can't afford it—free of charge. Just last year, 175 volunteer physicians, nurses, dentists, physician assistants, administrators, and about 50 medical students from the nearby Geisel School of Medicine served 1,253 low income residents, with 2,763 patient visits, a total of 3,267 patient interactions. With the additional help of dental students from regional schools, the dental clinic manages to fill cavities, pull teeth, create dentures, and clean the teeth of over 600 patients a year. And, to help foster ownership of one's own health care, the clinics offer workshops on such topics as diabetes, nutrition, substance misuse, smoking cessation, mental health, blood pressure, and heart disease, among other concerns.

In other words, while taking care of immediate needs, this Good Neighbor has been creating a more lasting legacy and a culture of health awareness. People who had been afraid to see a doctor for fear of what they might find out, folks who never trusted the medical system, or avoided the dentist, immigrant farm workers who didn't believe they could find medical care in a place they inhabited only seasonally and where the language wasn't their own, and even those local citizens who thought they didn't have the language to speak about their problems with doctors have found help at these clinics.

The voices of patients say it all: "They make me feel welcome." "They listen to me without my feeling that I'm being judged at the same time." And, "They treat me like a real human being." We all know the difference that can make.

I believe the Good Neighbor Health Clinic and the Red Logan Dental Clinic are not only giving good care. They are caring, and, by being so, are saving lives in many different ways.

I ask you today to join me in honoring the good work and the good people of the Good Neighbor Health Clinic.

HONORING GEORGE WILLIAM
MACE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today, I give honor to Mr. George William Mace of Edwards, Mississippi located in Hinds County, Mississippi.

Mr. George William Mace, was born in Edwards, Mississippi, in the Learned Community. Mr. George William Mace, was the 7th child born into a family of 8 children. He was

the baby boy. He was born to George Mace, Sr. and Pattie Marie Sublett Mace. He got the nickname, Beau, because he had a gentleman reputation with the ladies, where he never disrespected one.

Do not resist growing old, many are denied that privilege. In 1904 when Mr. Mace was born, the average life expectancy in the United States was forty-seven, there were only eight-thousand cars and one-hundred and forty-four miles of paved roads; only fourteen percent of the homes had bathtubs, and along with Alabama, Iowa, and Tennessee, Mississippi was more heavily populated than California. Having defied all life expectancies in the history of the United States, George lived to be 104 years old.

A man's educational start is directly connected to his future. Mr. Mace attended Elementary School in the Edwards Community. He attended Belmont/Popular Grove School and Oak Ridge School. He also attended Alcorn Agriculture College in Lorman, Mississippi. He returned home from Alcorn, to help work on his family's farm.

Come let us bow down and worship, let us kneel before the Lord God our maker. Mr. Mace, joined Old Oak Ridge M. B. Church (formerly known as Oak Ridge Church), where he served as an usher.

Faithful and hard work is rewarded. Mr. Mace's lifelong journey was extensive. He left home as an adult and applied for work with Illinois Central Railroad as a Pullman Porter. He worked in this position from 1933 until his retirement in 1972. Being the gentleman that he was, he was excellent in this chosen career. He was also a self-employed businessman while residing in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He owned his own barber shop and employed others to work with him.

Doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility he considered others before himself, while making a difference in society. When George retired from the railroad, he returned home to his family's farm. He became a cattleman along with his other siblings. He was also a member of the Masonic Family, Newman Lodge No. 522. He became a part of and joined the Mississippi Soil Conservation Association. He was a blessing to this community, touching the lives of family and friends. He was a compassionate man always willing to lend a helping hand and going the extra mile to make life better for others.

Reputation is what men and women think of us, but the family is the vessel of hope, that it may transcend the boundaries of earthly days and continue throughout endless eternity. Character is what God and his angels know of us. This is what the community knew of George "Beau" William Mace. He served his family and community well. His nieces and nephews thought very highly of him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring, Mr. George William Mace of the Mississippi Second Congressional District.

TRIBUTE TO COLLEEN BICKFORD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Colleen

Bickford of Corning, Iowa, for being honored with the Volunteer Award from the Corning Main Street Organization Committee.

Colleen volunteers regularly at the Carl Church, serves at the congregational meal site, and is an active member of the Senior Citizens Committee for the Adams County Fair. She also works with the Main Street Corning's Public Relations Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Colleen demonstrates the rewards of harnessing one's talents and sharing them with her community. Her efforts embody the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent her, and Iowans like her, in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Colleen for her achievements and in wishing her nothing but continued success.

RECOGNIZING LAKE COUNTY LAW
ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Lake County Sheriff Peyton Grinnell, Town of Lady Lake's Police Chief Chris McKinstry, City of Leesburg Police Chief Rob Hicks, City of Tavares Police Chief Stoney Lubins, Town of Howey-in-the-Hills Police Chief Rick Thomas, City of Fruitland Park Police Chief Michael Fewless, City of Mascotte Police Chief Eric Pedersen, and the law enforcement officers who keep Lake County safe every single day.

This week marks the annual observance of Police Week. Though we set aside one week a year to honor law enforcement, I encourage all Americans to join me not only this week, but every day, in recognizing the honor, courage, and commitment of America's law enforcement.

Our law enforcement officers are heroes in the community. They keep us safe, and are willing to put their lives on the line every day in the course of their duties. It is impossible to fully express our gratitude or adequately recognize the professionalism of the men and women who voluntarily put their lives on the line for our safety and security. It is with deep respect that we pause today to honor the memory of the heroes who gave the last full measure of devotion and made the ultimate sacrifice.

I want to extend my sincere appreciation to Lake County Sheriff Peyton Grinnell, Town of Lady Lake's Police Chief Chris McKinstry, City of Leesburg Police Chief Rob Hicks, City of Tavares Police Chief Stoney Lubins, Town of Howey-in-the-Hills Police Chief Rick Thomas, City of Fruitland Park Police Chief Michael Fewless, City of Mascotte Police Chief Eric Pedersen, and the law enforcement officers who bravely and selflessly serve Lake County. It is an honor to recognize them and all men and women in law enforcement.

JOHNSON & JOHNSON'S
COMMITMENT TO VETERANS**HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues a story of a corporate leader whose commitment to our nation's veterans is unmatched. Under the leadership of Alex Gorsky as CEO, Johnson and Johnson's commitment to providing the highest quality medical products is only matched by the firm's efforts to provide for the military service members it employs.

Johnson & Johnson's long history of supporting military service members began as early as the Spanish-American War. Beginning in 1898, Johnson & Johnson began retaining positions and paying salaries to employees during military service. For the past century, Johnson & Johnson has been at the cutting edge of developing initiatives to cater to the unique needs of military service members and veterans. Alex Gorsky has doubled down on this impressive record with an unwavering dedication to continuing these traditions for those who have served our nation.

Under Gorsky's leadership, Johnson & Johnson continues to make groundbreaking strides in support of those who have served with initiatives like the Johnson & Johnson Veterans Leadership Council (VLC). The VLC provides for the company's retired service members in an unprecedented manner by supporting the health care and recovery needs of our American heroes in 26 chapters across 11 states.

I was particularly impressed to learn of Johnson & Johnson's Enhanced Military Leave Policy, also instituted by Mr. Gorsky, which enables active service members to defend our nation without fear of job instability, falling behind on bills, or being overlooked during the transition period back at work. I've learned that Mr. Gorsky's own distinguished military career has given him insight into the inherent value of hiring active and retired military service members. A graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, Alex previously served as a U.S. Army Ranger and finished his career with the rank of Captain. Given his commendable service and past experience, Mr. Gorsky recognizes the importance of hiring veterans as they bring invaluable contributions to the workplace like discipline, integrity, critical thinking, and leadership skills.

Johnson & Johnson's military support is not just good corporate culture. Alex Gorsky has led the way in offering financial stability and resources for service members and their families across America, and rewarded our nation's finest for their noble, patriotic service. I believe his legacy as a corporate leader in veteran advocacy creates unquestioned good will, which is valued by consumers, service members, and community leaders. I commend Mr. Gorsky's efforts to put military service members first as they protect our nation at home and abroad, and help Johnson & Johnson tackle our pressing health care needs.

TRIBUTE TO SCOTT GILES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Scott Giles of Mount Ayr, Iowa, for being inducted into the Iowa High School Athletic Association Officials Hall of Fame.

This award was presented to Scott by the Iowa High School Athletic Association on March 10th, during the Boy's State Basketball Tournament. Scott has been officiating basketball for 34 years, including regular season, district, sub-state games and state tournaments. He has also officiated high school football for 25 years.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Scott embodies the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent him, and Iowans like him, in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him for this achievement and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

COMMEMORATING THE ALPENA
COUNTY GEORGE N. FLETCHER
LIBRARY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY**HON. JACK BERGMAN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it's my honor to recognize the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library as it celebrates 50 years of meaningful work in the Alpena community. Michiganders understand how important it is to have reliable access to library services, and we are so grateful for Alpena County Library's half-century of community service.

The establishment of a public library in Alpena dates to 1860 when the up-and-coming community commissioned just \$25 a year to maintain a collection in the private home of Diane Morse Richardson. Thirteen years later, the Alpena Public Schools system began housing the library's collection at Alpena High School, where it remained until a temporary location on Second Avenue was acquired. In 1967, the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library was officially established as a county library serving the educational, social, and historical interests of the community. Serving a community of just 2,700 people in 1860, the library now accommodates a population nearly 15 times that size by circulating some 120,000 articles and books.

In addition to offering an extensive collection of literature and other resources, the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library has consistently proven itself to be a leader in the community through targeted initiatives that enhance the wellbeing of all citizens. Programs like READ Tutors, which helps students achieve new reading levels and learn English as a second language, engages our young people in activities that help them reach their potential and prepare them for the next steps in their lives. The library has also started a new early childhood literacy-project called 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, which en-

courages parents to read 200 books a year to their children before the age of five. This program exemplifies the library's tremendous efforts to foster academic achievement within the community, and promotes childhood development in a robust family setting.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library for 50 years of service in the Alpena community. Northern Michigan residents can take great pride in knowing that Alpena is a better place thanks to the work and dedication of the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library. On behalf of my constituents across Michigan's First District, I thank the Alpena Community Library for its work and look forward to its continued success.

HONORING CPL. HAROLD
WESBECHER (RET.)**HON. MIKE BOST**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Harold Wesbecher's honorable service to our nation during the Korean War. Born February 16, 1929, in Evansville, Illinois, Harold graduated from Red Bud High School in 1947 and was drafted into the U.S. Army on June 19, 1952.

Faithfully serving our country over a two year deployment in the Southwest Pacific, Harold toured Mt. Fuji and Sendi, Japan alongside Pusan and the Chun Chon Valley of Korea. Guarding the Neutral Nations Inspection Team in Korea until May of 1954, Harold returned home to continue farming beef cattle and row crops for 60 years upon being discharged from the service.

The husband to Gerry Wesbecher and father of two children, Harold is known to his family as "The Boss" because of his hard work, integrity, and honesty. Today, he continues to be a lifelong member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, where he serves on the parish board.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service that Harold dutifully gave to our nation during the Korean War. We are forever grateful for his service.

THE GROWING RUSSIAN MILITARY
THREAT IN EUROPE**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my capacity as Co-Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission, I participated in a hearing to examine Russian military threats in the OSCE region.

Russia today stands in violation of the central commitments of the Helsinki Final Act. These commitments include respect for the territorial integrity of States, fundamental freedoms, and the fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law. In violating these commitments, Russia is threatening the

foundations of European security and recklessly endangering the lives of millions.

One such victim of Russian aggression is Joseph Stone, the 36-year-old American medic who was killed by a landmine while on patrol in separatist-controlled eastern Ukraine with the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission on April 23rd. If it weren't for Russia's unjustifiable aggression toward Ukraine's sovereignty there would be no need for such a monitoring mission. And yet, day after day, OSCE monitors put themselves in harm's way to try to reduce the tensions created by the reckless conduct of Russia and its proxies in eastern Ukraine. It is a conflict that has already claimed over ten thousand lives, and sadly is sure to claim more.

Russian aggression is not a localized phenomenon—it threatens the entire region. Moscow has seized sovereign territory by force, threatened to use tactical nuclear weapons against other countries, harassed U.S. and NATO military assets, and abandoned key transparency measures and commitments. These actions are unacceptable.

In the face of such provocations, the United States must leave no doubt that we stand behind our Eastern European and Baltic Allies. There is no time to waste: we must ensure the confidence of our friends at this critical juncture.

One way to do this is to continue building a credible conventional deterrent to Russian aggression alongside our allies, in particular Poland and the Baltic States. I have consistently supported robust funding for the European Reassurance Initiative. With the support of this initiative, since 2014, NATO members have held over 1,000 military exercises in Europe. ERI has allowed the U.S. to participate more extensively in such exercises and increase its deployment of soldiers and military assets in allied countries. Furthermore, it has helped us to build the capacity of our partners and generally make our commitment to European security felt. These kinds of activities must be sustained and expanded to ensure that we are ready to counter any threat at any time.

Mr. Speaker, the United States must act, bilaterally and within NATO, to robustly deter, defend against, and roll back Russian aggression in the OSCE region. This includes ensuring that Ukraine has the defensive weapons it needs to more effectively repel Russian occupying forces and respond to Russian-backed proxies. As Ukraine President Petro Poroshenko told a joint session of Congress several years ago, "One cannot win the war with blankets." That is at true today as it was then.

If Russia's invasion, occupation, and fracturing of Ukraine stands, then Russia will be emboldened to do likewise in other neighboring countries. It is in the interests of the United States to help ensure that the Russian Federation does not become the new Soviet Union, invading, occupying and annexing its neighbors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL'S WORK TO PROTECT CITIZENS' INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the American Human Rights Council for their advocacy and efforts. The AHRC has been a steadfast champion in ensuring that all Americans, regardless of background, are able to exercise their civil liberties.

Founded in 2014, the AHRC brings together community leaders and civil rights activists to promote and defend human rights defined in the United States' Constitution and by the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights. Initially focused on protecting and preserving the rights of prisoners, the AHRC has expanded its advocacy efforts to address pressing humanitarian issues in the United States and abroad. In addition to its work on prisoners' rights, the organization has also strongly pushed for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Yemen and relief for the humanitarian issues facing the country's citizens, as well as opposed the Syrian government's attacks on innocent civilians during the Syrian civil war. The AHRC also recognizes outstanding individuals who work to further the group's mission during its annual Spirit of Humanity Gala event.

The AHRC has played a critical role in protecting and advancing human rights both in the community and around the world. By working with state and local partners, the AHRC has been able to draw attention to human rights issues by hosting public forums and educational awareness events. In the past year, AHRC has investigated dozens of inmate inquiries relating to issues in prison facilities and participated in multiple community forums, including discussions about community policing initiatives and an annual Capitol Day visit to Lansing in order to highlight the organization's mission and its concerns with elected officials. These efforts have helped raise awareness while driving action to further the AHRC's mission of promoting human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the American Human Rights Council for its work to protect and preserve Americans' civil liberties. The AHRC's work has helped safeguard our nation's fundamental rights.

RECOGNIZING M. SMITH COFFMAN FOR HER INSPIRATIONAL POEM, GHOSTS OF THE PAST

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize M. Smith Coffman for her powerful poem and kind words of inspiration to many. While the poem is meant to move and inspire our service members and veterans in times of need, I believe everyone should experience it. I intend for everyone to procure

some good fortune and hope from her message.

GHOSTS OF THE PAST

The fog shrouded, silent vale,
comes to life before my trail.
Ghosts of the past, ride in the predawn mist,
in their stirring I am by angels kissed.

Here, the plan of war was born,
and there, soldiers' lives were torn.
Brave warriors on snorting, restless steeds,
our heroes against men of evil deeds.

See Lexington and Concord's men of pride.
Rebs and Yanks who at Chickamauga died.
See the tired, straggling wagon train,
faces parched by sun, in battle's strain.

Indians silently move their camps,
past sod houses lit by dim oil lamps.
I see the brave men from the Alamo,
as on, and on, and on they go.

Oh, ancient rocks, you saw it all,
you saw where gallant man did fall.
You echoed the shot, felt the glance of spear,
the price for freedom, we hold dear.

Our troops who fell on foreign soils,
they the victors, won the spoils.
There were those from the sky
and from the sea,

They gave of themselves to keep us free.
Their souls, at last, are at home,
no more foreign lands to roam.

All are soothed in the mist,
as o'er their separate paths they twist.
Their laughter softly echoes from the rills,
and across the windswept, rugged hills.
Mingling, they have enemies no more,
here at home or foreign shore.

In cadence, I heard them say,
"Let not our sons go this way.

Alas the new born cries at birth,
but men must know of joy on earth.
Oh, that we could right the wrong;
Oh, that we could leave but song."

Oh Lord, many of our brave, gallant men of
pride,
put their lives upon the line, fought and
died.

Men with bodies and emotions torn,
this great loss we all should mourn.
I stand and salute you, one and all.
You went through hell, for country's call.

Dear Lord, I pray their pain relive,
give them strength and hope, and ease.
They should receive the best of care,
FOR 'TIS BY THEM WE BREATHE FREE
AIR.

For freedom's cause they did not bend,
they pledged their allegiance to the flag
until the end.

"Children, Listen," the midst does sing.
"We know not what this day or the years
will bring.

Stand brave and strong for liberty's call.
Your country needs you one and all.
Give thanks for all that was and is,
and for the heroes who lived, and live.
Give thanks for freedom that was not lost.
Give thanks to those who paid the cost."

The mist soon melted into the morning sun.
THEY ARE OUR HEART'S BLOOD
THEY ARE NOT GONE.

These brave men and women did not live or
die in vain.

Our flag unfurled we will sustain.

IN GOD WE TRUST

AMEN

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing M. Smith Coffman for her encouraging words.

IN RECOGNITION OF PETTY OFFICER
MICHAEL JOHN CRUTCHFIELD

HON. DAVID A. TROTT

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise, today, to highlight the distinguished career of one of my constituents, Petty Officer Michael John Crutchfield.

On April 27, 1970, when others were awaiting their draft notices, 20-year-old Petty Officer Crutchfield took it upon himself to enlist in the United States Coast Guard and serve his country.

A true patriot, in February 1972, Petty Officer Crutchfield, once again, decided to volunteer for our country, this time in Vietnam. Despite landing unarmed with a dozen of his colleagues, Michael fulfilled his mission and returned to Barbers Point, Hawaii, where he served the balance of his three-year assignment.

Following his service in Hawaii, Petty Officer Crutchfield served as a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Heilo No. 1377 crew, conducting search and rescue missions in a HH-52A helicopter based out of Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

Petty Officer Crutchfield's service to our nation is exemplified by such acts as saving a young man from having his legs amputated and aiding the search of 29 crewmen who perished when the Edmund Fitzgerald sank in the icy water of Lake Superior in November of 1975.

But, Petty Officer Crutchfield is more than one man—he is a testament of the selfless patriotism and sacrifice embodied by the over 35,000 veterans in Southeast Michigan.

He is a representation of the bravery and honor embodied by so many servicemen and women in my district.

Today, I would like to recognize each and every one of them, especially Petty Officer Crutchfield, for their outstanding service to our great nation.

Representing them in Congress is my utmost honor, and I will continue to work tirelessly for them to give them the recognition and respect they deserve.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE FLOOD
PREVENTION ACT OF 2017**

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Flood Prevention Act of 2017. The bill would amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA) to include the nation's capital in the definition of "coastal state." Our bill would correct an apparent oversight in the omission of the District of Columbia, and would make the District eligible to receive federal funding and provide oversight for federally issued permits/facilities/ actions that affect the coastal waters of the District. The District urgently needs the protection of the CZMA because of serious flood risks that currently affect both residents, businesses and

federal assets, including the National Mall and the cluster of downtown federal agencies.

In an effort to reduce coastal flood risk, Congress has authorized a number of programs to help states and territories respond to floods and mitigate risk through resiliency projects. Among these programs, the CZMA provides planning and technical services to assist states in protecting, restoring and developing coastal communities and resources. Once the federal government approves a state's coastal management plan, the state becomes eligible for grants. Federal actions must be consistent with the state plans and vice versa.

Even though the District is located on two rivers and has suffered substantial coastal floods in the past, D.C. was omitted from the list of eligible states and territories in the CZMA. This oversight may have occurred because the CZMA was passed in 1972—before the District achieved home rule or had a Member of Congress. Under Section 304 of the CZMA, "coastal state[s]" include the states and the U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, and American Samoa). Absent from this definition is the District, even though the District, including the federal complex, is under a serious threat from rising sea levels. Because the territories are included in the definition of "coastal states," it appears that D.C.'s omission is a mistake, which only Congress can correct.

Scientists have predicted that the tides on the Atlantic Coast could rise two to four feet by the year 2100, causing property worth as much as \$7 billion in the District to be routinely under threat by floodwaters. This damage not only includes private homes and businesses, but the National Mall, federal buildings, and three military bases located in the District. The Anacostia and Potomac rivers are both tidally influenced, showing tangible salt water effects (and fish) and are part of an "intertidal-zone" existing between high and low maritime tides. In addition, the Maryland and Virginia coastal zones each include the tidal Potomac River, with Maryland's zone ending at the District line. Because of these factors, the District should be eligible for CZMA grants just like the states and territories already listed in the CZMA.

I urge support for this bill.

**IN RECOGNITION OF MR. STEVE
ANDREWS**

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it's my honor today to acknowledge the life of a devoted public servant and United States Veteran, Steve Andrews, who died at the age of 67 on Saturday, January 28, 2017 in Petoskey, Michigan.

Steve was born on October 15, 1949, to Tracy and Barbara Andrews and grew up in the heart of Northern Michigan in the city of Gaylord. Following his high school graduation in 1967, Steve joined the United States Navy where he worked as a medic on a number of bases around the world. Steve served with

distinction from the U.S. Naval Hospital in Guam to the 1st Marine Division and Marine 1st Force Reconnaissance Company in Vietnam and was awarded the Purple Heart and the Navy Commendation Medal for his role in saving countless Marines' lives during the Vietnam War.

After coming back home, Steve became a successful entrepreneur, and in 1978, Northern Michigan residents recognized Steve's commitment to community service by electing him to serve as State Representative for the 106th Michigan House District. Steve retired from the Michigan legislature in 1982 after serving two terms and refocused his efforts on his small business and family.

During the next 35 years, Steve and his wife, Karen, grew their small business, Sturgeon River Pottery, into a well-established and widely respected Midwest retailer with a robust operation and thousands of supporters across the country. Further, Steve's creative talents and generosity led him to be an active member in his community where, in addition to being a successful small business owner, he coached youth football and baseball teams, served on the Board of Trustees of North Central Michigan College, served as President of the Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce, and was a founding member of Petoskey's Art in the Park.

Mr. Speaker, Steve's contributions to Northern Michigan cannot be overstated, and his family and community can take pride in knowing that Northern Michigan is a better place thanks to his life's work. On behalf of Michigan's 1st Congressional District, I ask you to join me in recognizing an outstanding public servant whose contributions will continue to bless Northern Michigan residents for many years to come. May God bless Steve and his family always.

**TRIBUTE TO MARGARET R.
GAITER**

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to pay tribute to a longtime friend and one of the finest women I have ever known.

Margaret Gaiter recently passed away on May 12, 2017 at the age of 91. I was honored to know Mrs. Gaiter and her late Husband, Felix. They both helped me as a young attorney by giving me the privilege of representing their business. Mrs. Gaiter had always been very kind to me and was a person who treated everyone with love and respect.

A 1947 graduate of Knoxville College, Ms. Gaiter worked for the Knoxville Housing Authority in the 1950s and 1960s where she helped families relocate from dilapidated homes and buildings. She also worked for the Knox County Public School System's parent involvement program which she retired from in 1988.

A member of Rogers Memorial Baptist Church in Knoxville, she served as minister of music for the church for over three decades. Mrs. Gaiter always lived her life by the Golden Rule.

In 2007, Mrs. Gaiter and her late husband Felix were awarded the Knoxville Area Urban

League's Whitney M. Young, Jr. Lifetime Award for their work on social justice and civil rights issues. This speaks to the role she played as a leader in her community.

In 2007, after the Knoxville News-Sentinel wrote a very nice series of articles about Felix and Margaret Gaiter, I wrote a letter to the paper commending it for doing so. In my letter I stated: "The Gaiters have touched thousands of lives in kind and positive ways and have set an outstanding example for everyone. This Nation is a better place today because of Felix and Margaret Gaiter."

My wife Lynn went to visit Mrs. Gaiter a few weeks ago when she found out Margaret might possibly be nearing her death. Lynn and I send our condolences to Mrs. Gaiter's children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Margaret Gaiter was a wonderful wife, mother, and citizen. I call her life and accomplishments to the attention of my Colleagues and others. This Nation would be a much better place if we had more people like her.

HONORING JUDGE PATRICIA D.
WISE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Judge Patricia D. Wise, elected in 1989, is one of four Chancellors of the Fifth

Chancery Court District of Hinds County, Mississippi.

Formerly Mrs. Wise was managing attorney and partner in the law firm of Dockins & Wise, Attorneys at Law, Jackson, Mississippi. Her private practice was in the area of Domestic Relations-Family Law, Personal Injury and General Civil practice. She served as Family Law Resource Attorney for Central Mississippi Legal Services.

An Oxford, Mississippi native, she has lived in Jackson, Mississippi for the past thirty-five years. She received her Bachelors of Science in Special Education, her Masters of Communicative Disorders and her Juris Doctorate degree all from the University of Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Judge Patricia D. Wise for her dedication to serving others.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S3023–3049

Measures Introduced: Nineteen bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1171–1189, S. Res. 172–174, and S. Con. Res. 15–16.

Pages S3041–42

Measures Reported:

S. 582, to reauthorize the Office of Special Counsel, with amendments. (S. Rept. No. 115–74)

Page S3041

Measures Passed:

Older Americans Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 172, designating May 2017 as “Older Americans Month”.

Page S3048

National Police Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 173, designating the week of May 15 through May 21, 2017, as “National Police Week”.

Page S3048

Branstad Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to the People’s Republic of China.

Page S3039

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 86 yeas to 12 nays (Vote No. 132), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination.

Page S3033

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 3 p.m., on Monday, May, 22, 2017, Senate resume consideration of the nomination, post-cloture; that the time until 5:30 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form; and that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule XXII, the post-cloture time on the nomination expire at 5:30 p.m.

Page S3048

Sullivan Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of John J. Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

Page S3039

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition

of the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to the People’s Republic of China.

Page S3039

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 52 yeas to 46 nays (Vote No. EX. 131), Rachel L. Brand, of Iowa, to be Associate Attorney General.

Page S3033

Todd Philip Haskell, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo.

Tulinabo Salama Mushingi, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Page S3033

Routine lists in the Foreign Service.

Page S3048

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

David J. Redl, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.

Claire M. Grady, of Pennsylvania, to be Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security.

Neomi Rao, of the District of Columbia, to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget.

4 Army nominations in the rank of general.

Routine lists in the Army, Marine Corps, and Navy.

Pages S3048–49

Messages from the House:

Pages S3040–41

Measures Referred:

Page S3041

Executive Reports of Committees:

Page S3041

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages S3042–43

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:

Pages S3043–45

Additional Statements:

Page S3040

Authorities for Committees to Meet:

Pages S3047–48

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—132)

Page S3033

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 2:24 p.m., until 3 p.m. on Monday, May 22, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S3048.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Kari A. Bingen, of Virginia, to be a Principal Deputy Under Secretary, and Robert Story Kareem, of the District of Columbia, who was introduced by Senator McConnell, and Kenneth P. Rapuano, of Virginia, who was introduced by Representative Comstock, both to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Defense, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine domestic and international policy, including S. 1002, to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, S. 976, to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, S. 881, to reduce risks to the financial system by limiting banks' ability to engage in certain risky activities and limiting conflicts of interest, to reinstate certain Glass-Steagall Act protections that were repealed by the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, after receiving testimony from Steven T. Mnuchin, Secretary of the Treasury.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1129, to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 118, to make exclusive the authority of the Federal Government to regulate the labeling of products made in the United States and introduced in interstate or foreign commerce, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 396, to make technical amendments to certain marine fish conservation statutes;

S. 793, to prohibit sale of shark fins, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1057, to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

S. 1096, to amend and enhance certain maritime programs of the Department of Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

NOMINATION

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senator Gardner, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee ordered favorably reported an original bill entitled, "The Creating High-Quality Results and Outcomes Necessary to Improve Chronic (CHRONIC) Care Act of 2017".

NOMINATION

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of William Francis Hagerty IV, of Tennessee, to be Ambassador to Japan, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senator Alexander, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Amul R. Thapar, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 38 public bills, H.R. 2510–2547; and 13 resolutions, H.J.

Res. 101; H. Con. Res. 54–57; and H.Res. 336–343 were introduced.

Pages H4355–58

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages H4359–60

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 953, to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–131, Part 1); and

H.R. 1726, to amend title 14, United States Code, to improve the organization of such title and to incorporate certain transfers and modifications into such title, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–132). **Page H4355**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Marshall to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H4315**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:55 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H4321**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Pastor Glen Berteau, The House Modesto, Modesto, CA. **Page H4321**

Recess: The House recessed at 1:04 p.m. and reconvened at 2:15 p.m. **Page H4331**

Probation Officer Protection Act of 2017—Rule for Consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 324, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1039) to amend section 3606 of title 18, United States Code, to grant probation officers authority to arrest hostile third parties who obstruct or impede a probation officer in the performance of official duties, by a recorded vote of 230 ayes to 184 noes, Roll No. 264, after the previous question was ordered by a ye-a-and-nay vote of 226 yeas to 188 nays, Roll No. 263. **Pages H4331–32**

Recess: The House recessed at 3:45 p.m. and reconvened at 3:56 p.m. **Page H4340**

Thin Blue Line Act: The House passed H.R. 115, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide additional aggravating factors for the imposition of the death penalty based on the status of the victim, by a ye-a-and-nay vote of 271 yeas to 143 nays, Roll No. 265. **Page H4341**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–17 shall be considered as adopted, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. **Pages H4332–33**

H. Res. 323, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 115) was agreed to yesterday, May 17th.

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures. Consideration began Tuesday, May 16th.

Honoring Hometown Heroes Act: H.R. 1892, to amend title 4, United States Code, to provide for the flying of the flag at half-staff in the event of the death of a first responder in the line of duty, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ ye-a-and-nay vote of 411 yeas to 1 nay, Roll No. 266. **Pages H4341–42**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three ye-a-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H4331–32, H4332, H4341, and H4341–42. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Committee Meetings

COAST GUARD REQUIREMENTS, PRIORITIES AND FUTURE ACQUISITION PLANS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held an oversight hearing entitled “Coast Guard Requirements, Priorities and Future Acquisition Plans”. Testimony was heard from Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard.

EMERGING TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGIES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a hearing entitled “Emerging Transportation Technologies”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. CAPITOL POLICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the U.S. Capitol Police. Testimony was heard from Steven A. Sund, Assistant Chief of Police; and Matthew R. Verderosa, Chief of Police.

APPROPRIATIONS—LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the Library of Congress. Testimony was heard from Carla D. Hayden, Librarian of Congress; Bud Barton, Chief Information Officer, Library of Congress; and Robert R. Newlen, Deputy Librarian for Institutional Advancement, Library of Congress.

AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE IN A CONTESTED ENVIRONMENT

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled “Amphibious Warfare in a Contested Environment”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

REGULATORY BARRIERS FACING WORKERS AND FAMILIES SAVING FOR RETIREMENT

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing entitled “Regulatory Barriers Facing Workers and Families Saving for Retirement”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a markup on H.R. 1222, the “Congenital Heart Futures Reauthorization Act of 2017”; H.R. 2410, the “Sickle Cell Disease Research, Surveillance, Prevention, and Treatment Act of 2017”; and H.R. 2430, the “FDA Reauthorization Act of 2017”. H.R. 1222 and H.R. 2430 were forwarded to the full Committee, as amended. H.R. 2410 was forwarded to the full Committee, without amendment.

LESSONS FROM THE IMF'S BAILOUT OF GREECE

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade held a hearing entitled “Lessons from the IMF's Bailout of Greece”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. INTERESTS IN AFRICA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “U.S. Interests in Africa”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

DISAPPEARED, JAILED, AND TORTURED IN CHINA: WIVES PETITION FOR THEIR HUSBANDS' FREEDOM

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled “Disappeared, Jailed, and Tortured in China: Wives Petition for Their Husbands' Freedom”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence held a markup on the H.R. 2453, the “DHS Intelligence Rotational Assignment Program Act of 2017”; H.R. 2468, the “Unifying DHS Intelligence Enterprise Act”; H.R. 2471, the “Terrorist Release Announcements to Counter Extremist Recidivism Act”; H.R. 2454, the “Department of Homeland Security Data Framework Act of 2017”; H.R. 2470, the “Homeland Threat Assessment Act”; H.R. 2443, the “Department of Homeland Security Classified Facility Inventory Act”; H.R. 2427, the “Pathways to Improving Homeland Security At the Local Level Act”; H.R.

2433, the “Homeland Security Assessment of Terrorists Use of Virtual Currencies Act”; and H.R. 2442, the “Office of State and Local Law Enforcement Information Sharing Review Act”. H.R. 2443 and H.R. 2471 were reported to the full Committee, as amended. H.R. 2427, H.R. 2433, H.R. 2442, H.R. 2453, H.R. 2454, H.R. 2468, and H.R. 2470 were reported to the full Committee, without amendment.

FROM THE BORDER TO DISASTERS AND BEYOND: CRITICAL CANINE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DHS MISSION

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency held a hearing entitled “From the Border to Disasters and Beyond: Critical Canine Contributions to the DHS Mission”. Testimony was heard from Jennifer Brown, Canine Search Specialist, Team Veterinarian, Florida Task Force, Urban Search and Rescue, and the following officials from the Department of Homeland Security: Damian Montes, Director, Canine Training Program, Customs and Border Protection; Melanie Harvey, Director, Threat Assessment Division, Transportation Security Administration; Peter Jaquez, Acting Deputy Chief, Law Enforcement Operations-Specialty Programs, Border Patrol; and Patrick Carrick, Director, Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency, Science and Technology Directorate.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1973, the “Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse Act of 2017”; and H.R. 2473, the “Enforcing Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2017”. H.R. 1973 and H.R. 2473 were ordered reported, as amended.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans held a hearing on H.R. 2371, to require the Administrator of the Western Area Power Administration to establish a pilot project to provide increased transparency for customers, and for other purposes; and the “Water Rights Protection Act”. Testimony was heard from Dennis Sullivan, Chief Financial Officer, Western Area Power Administration; Chris Treese, External Affairs Manager, Colorado River District; and public witnesses.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION: AN UPDATE

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Federal Employee Compensation: An Update”. Testimony was heard from Joseph Kile, Assistant Director for Microeconomic Studies, Congressional Budget Office;

Robert Goldenkoff, Director of Strategic Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

**BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA:
IMPROVING WATER QUALITY THROUGH
INTEGRATED PLANNING**

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Improving Water Quality Through Integrated Planning”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

**HOW TAX REFORM WILL GROW OUR
ECONOMY AND CREATE JOBS**

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Tax Policy held a hearing entitled “How Tax Reform Will Grow Our Economy and Create Jobs”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

**CURRENT STATUS OF THE MEDICARE
PROGRAM, PAYMENT SYSTEMS, AND
EXTENDERS**

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled “Current Status of the Medicare Program, Payment Systems, and Extenders”. Testimony was heard from Mark Miller, Execu-

tive Director, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY,
MAY 19, 2017**

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2018 Priorities and Posture of the National Security Space Enterprise”, 8 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Environment, hearing entitled “Drinking Water System Improvement Act and Related Issues of Funding, Management, and Compliance Assistance under the Safe Drinking Water Act”, 8:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing entitled “IRS Reform: Lessons Learned from the National Taxpayer Advocate”, 9 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

3 p.m., Monday, May 22

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, post-cloture, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, May 19

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Complete consideration of H.R. 1039—Probation Officer Protection Act of 2017.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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Congressional Record

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