



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JULY 24, 2018

No. 124

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 24, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVEN M. PALAZZO 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 8, 2018, 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. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

NEW LEADERSHIP IS NEEDED IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it seems every morning we are greeted by another outrage from the Trump administration. Today, we find that the Department of the Interior deliberately manipulated the information surrounding the decision to amend the boundaries of national monuments. They withheld information about the

benefits of the monument designation, benefits for Native Americans, for wildlife, for the local economy, and for the environment.

The only way we found out about this manipulation is because they inadvertently disclosed the entire memorandum, exposed for everybody to see how they blatantly manipulated the process. But this is just another example.

This last week, we have seen attacks on our long-time friends and allies in Europe, undermining the NATO alliance, questioning the integrity of our American intelligence service, and assaulting American business and consumers with this ill-advised trade war and the tariffs, which are just taxes on American families. This is, in part, due to the fact that we are not getting any pushback on these outrages from most Republicans in Congress, not standing up to Trump for America and for our values.

It appears that most of my Republican friends are held hostage to the most extreme elements in their districts. They are given enhanced influence because of the practice of partisan gerrymandering, drawing boundaries to enhance the power of the Republican majority, so you only have to worry about voters in the primary.

I have long supported independent commissions to draw these boundaries, have proposed legislation federally. Although there appears to be little appetite in Congress, luckily, people out in the States are taking matters into their own hands. We are watching citizen initiatives in Michigan, in Utah, and in Colorado. Voters, this year, will have a chance to vote on fair and honest redistricting if the U.S. Chamber and the Republican Party are not able to block it from being voted on, as they are trying to do in Michigan.

When voters, again, pick the politicians instead of politicians picking the voters, it is much more likely that

Congress will do its job. Mr. Speaker, until we get fair districts, we will have to rely on renewed, energized voter engagement to elect a Congress that will do its job.

The good news is that the evidence all across America is that people are responding to a new generation of political leadership. They are getting involved in unprecedented numbers—more voters, more activism. They are going to elect, as leaders, new Members who will provide the accountability to hold in check this reckless administration.

It is too bad it looks like we will have to wait for the election for the next Congress to do its job.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE TO HOST INNOVATION FORUM AND SHOWCASE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House Education and the Workforce Committee will host innovators from across the country for the bipartisan Innovation Forum and Showcase. The Innovation Forum will begin at 10 a.m. in room 2175 of the Rayburn House Office Building. Five panels of innovators will speak and answer questions from committee members about their work. From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., members of the public are invited to tour the Innovation Showcase in the Rayburn foyer, where the innovators will be available to share information about their work.

As a senior member of the committee, I am so proud of the bipartisan Innovation Forum and Showcase. This event will certainly highlight hard-working American innovators from all walks of life. Tomorrow, there will be 24 innovators who have traveled to

□ 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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Washington to discuss how they run career and technical education and workforce development programs in their communities.

I am incredibly honored to have Joe Luther, from the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology located in Pleasant Gap, Centre County, Pennsylvania, be there. Mr. Luther is the horticulture and landscaping instructor at CPI. He is well loved by his students and has received numerous accolades for his performance in the classroom.

In 2014, Mr. Luther was named the ACTE New Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year for Pennsylvania. In December, he was awarded the National Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year from NOCTI, which is presented annually to recognize career and technical education teachers for their outstanding service.

I visited Mr. Luther in his classroom at CPI and out in the community, where his students routinely work on projects or participate in competitions. In January, Mr. Luther's landscaping students secured their fourth consecutive first place win at the Pennsylvania Farm Show as a part of the agricultural education landscape exhibits.

Mr. Speaker, the Pennsylvania Farm Show is the Nation's largest indoor agriculture event, and the CPI students beat a total of seven other schools to take the top prize for their exhibit. I know these students are talented, and it is their teacher, Mr. Luther, who truly inspires them to reach great heights. Through his hands-on instruction, Mr. Luther affords students in his classroom the ability to design, build, and maintain their landscaping projects. He lets them interact with customers and discuss real transactions. He brings real-life scenarios into the classroom at every opportunity to show students what their futures can be like in the workforce.

I look forward to having Mr. Luther here in Washington for tomorrow's Innovation Forum and Showcase. I know that, because of dedicated teachers like him, scores of students will be set on a path to success in life through career and technical education programs.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to all the innovators who will participate tomorrow to share with Congress and the public how they are addressing the Nation's education and workforce development challenges. As co-chair of the bipartisan House Career and Technical Education Caucus and a consistent advocate for high-quality career and technical education, I know these programs not only shape the future of our Nation's youth, but will be the foundation for a new era of economic growth in the United States. And the future looks bright.

Mr. Speaker, on a related note, I was thankful to the Senate last evening, which passed my legislation which already passed out of this body almost a year ago, H.R. 2353, the Strengthening

Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. I look forward to ironing out just a few minor differences, some good refinements that the Senate made, and we will see about getting that to the President's desk, quite frankly, providing greater access to more effective, skills-based education for all Americans seeking the American Dream of opportunity.

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES ON GUAM

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Guam Temporary Workforce Act. A near 100 percent denial of temporary H-2B petitions on Guam has hindered our island's ability to grow the economy and provide affordable and timely services for our civilian population.

While our community fully supports providing job opportunities and career advancement for those already living on Guam, we do not have the population or the organic workforce to fill the labor demands of our island. Local companies have tried to recruit from other territories and mainland United States, all to no avail.

I am pleased that we made some progress in alleviating these workforce challenges in the defense bill that we are considering this week, but, Mr. Speaker, we need to do more. The Guam Temporary Workforce Act would make sure that local labor needs are met by giving the Governor of Guam more input in temporary labor need determinations. Specifically, it would allow him to certify the temporary needs of Guam's civilian labor market while safeguarding the local economy from overreliance on temporary workers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this very, very important measure and to support our island economy.

TRILATERAL ALLIANCE OF GEORGIA, UKRAINE, AND MOLDOVA

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, our friends in Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia are facing major threats to their sovereignty from the Russian bear. These young democracies are striving to build peaceful, civil societies and effective governing institutions after decades of Soviet tyranny. Yet Vladimir Putin, the Napoleon of Siberia, refuses to accept their independence and sovereign rights as free nations.

For years, Russian troops have occupied each of these nations and incited violence within the borders. Moscow has used corruption and coercion to undermine the rule of law in democratic institutions of each of these nations. Putin continues to use cyber warfare against each of these nations.

We, as leaders of the free world and guarantors of the international, rules-based order, have a duty to stand by these sovereign states. In some cases, Mr. Speaker, we have signed pledges to do so.

Their struggle for freedom is not some distant battle that does not concern our well-being. Their fight for self-determination is a battle for the global order and the survival of democracy in the face of foreign tyranny, specifically Putin's tyranny.

Nations and the people they represent have the sole right to determine their own fates. Foreign bullies like Putin should not threaten or dictate their way of life or the futures of those children.

If we allow Russia to so blatantly break international law, particularly the fundamentals of sovereignty and territorial integrity, where will it end? When will the Russian bear march in the streets of some other friend, a NATO ally, perhaps?

We must recognize their courage in the face of such a daunting challenge and send a message to the Kremlin that we stand with our Eastern European friends on their quest to be a free nation and more integrated into the West. That is why I have introduced H. Res. 955, to affirm U.S. support to the nations of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova in their effort to retain political sovereignty and territorial integrity.

I am joined in sponsoring this important bipartisan resolution by Georgia Caucus co-chair, Representative CONNOLLY from Virginia; as well as the co-chairs of the Moldova Caucus, Representative OLSON from Texas and Representative PRICE from North Carolina; and the co-chairs of the congressional Ukrainian Caucus, Representatives KAPTUR of Ohio, HARRIS of Maryland, FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, and LEVIN of Michigan.

Our resolution reaffirms the commitment of the United States to support the democratically elected governments of these three nations. It condemns Russia's violation of the Budapest Memorandum, a commitment it made in 1994 to ensure the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Putin has lied. He lied in his commitment. Our legislation calls for the immediate and complete withdrawal of all Russian military and security personnel and equipment from the nations of Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova. It calls for Moscow to end its destabilizing activities in all regions of these three countries. It commends the ongoing trilateral cooperation between the Governments of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova to confront Russia's destabilizing activity, and it voices our support for U.S. assistance to these three nations, assistance that strengthens their capacity to resist Russia's aggression.

□ 1015

The resolution calls on all free nations of Europe, the United Nations,

and international partners to continue to apply pressure on the totalitarian state of Russia to uphold its obligations, and it reaffirms U.S. support for these three nations integrating into the European Union.

This implies that Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova must also meet their obligations under EU association agreements to commit first and foremost to meaningful progress on economic reforms, strengthening democratic institutions, combating corruption, building independent judicial systems, and holding to the rule of law.

This resolution marks our shared commitment to democracy in these great countries to be united to stand against Putin's aggression.

Freedom-loving countries must stop the Russian bear and Putin's desire to be czar of a new Putinland. As John F. Kennedy said many years ago: "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty."

And that is just the way it is.

UNDERMINING INSURANCE IN THE MARKETPLACE

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about a brave young woman, an Arizonan named Vanessa Ramirez.

When she was just 23 years old, Vanessa received a devastating diagnosis. Doctors told her that she had ovarian cancer, yet Vanessa refused to put her dreams on hold. She somehow managed to fit in chemotherapy sessions between her classes at Arizona State.

Eventually, Vanessa pulled through. She beat cancer, and, today, she has two happy, healthy kids.

Vanessa has overcome a lot in her young life, but thanks to the Affordable Care Act, there is one challenge she won't be forced to endure: going without health insurance.

Despite her preexisting condition, Vanessa was able to purchase an affordable plan through the ObamaCare marketplace. Her children are also covered under KidsCare, our State's Children's Health Insurance Program. However, if Donald Trump gets his way, Vanessa's story soon could take a sad turn.

Having abolished the individual mandate, Republican State attorneys general, backed by President Trump, are now arguing in court that rules prohibiting insurers from charging higher rates on the basis of a preexisting condition or even denying coverage completely should be ruled unconstitutional.

The mandate is so central to ObamaCare, Republicans claim that, without it, the courts should simply throw out the whole Affordable Care

Act altogether. Their arguments are clearly baseless. But if Republicans succeed, millions of Americans like Vanessa could quickly lose their coverage.

Of course, that is not all the Trump administration is doing to undermine the Affordable Care Act. President Trump blocked cost-sharing reduction payments to insurers, sending shock waves of uncertainty through insurance markets across the Nation and raising costs for consumers in premiums. Trump also cut open-enrollment periods and slashed funding to help Americans sign up for insurance.

Trump and the GOP don't care about the people they are hurting. His only objective is to erase the legacy of his predecessor.

Mr. Speaker, no issue crystalizes the differences between our two political parties like this one. Democrats don't think your insurance company should be allowed to drop you because you get sick. Democrats don't believe you should go bankrupt and lose your home simply because you get in an accident. Democrats are committed to the belief that healthcare is a right, not a privilege, for every single American.

On the other hand, Republicans want to turn back the clock to a time when a minor diagnosis could lead to the loss of coverage, when young people were kicked off their parents' plan as soon as they turned 18, when simply being a woman somehow qualified as a pre-existing condition. That is not right.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans couldn't repeal the Affordable Care Act in Congress. Now they are just trying to sabotage it from the White House, and millions of Americans, like Vanessa Ramirez, could lose access to lifesaving care as a result. We can't allow that to happen.

HONORING DAVID ALEXANDER HOGUE

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

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to recognize a true American, David Alexander Hogue. David is the son of Grady and Dovie Hogue, born in 1946 in Blacksburg, South Carolina. He attended Blacksburg public schools and was elected president of his high school senior class.

He then enrolled at the University of South Carolina School of Pharmacy, where he graduated in 1970. After working in a drugstore in York, South Carolina, and Cherokee drug store in Gaffney, South Carolina, he returned to Blacksburg, where he became the owner of Iron City Pharmacy, which was a 75-year-old business.

Among his many accomplishments, he formed the Iron City Band where he played piano and toured the entire Southeast with his band. As a member of the Blacksburg First Baptist

Church, he was a member of the choir; he was a deacon; he was a trustee; and he was chairman of his Sunday school class.

In 1989, David entered the political arena, where he was elected to the Blacksburg City Council, where he was appointed mayor pro tempore. He was then appointed mayor by then-Governor Carroll Campbell after his predecessor was removed from office, and he won a special election for mayor in June of 1990, where he has served honorably for the last 28 years.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize, in the 115th session of Congress, a true American, David Alexander Hogue.

RESHAPE TRADE DEALS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, on the important economic challenge of renegotiating NAFTA, once again, the Trump administration is leading us down a chaotic and unstable path. Our Nation must fix bad trade deals to create good jobs and stop the wage race to the bottom.

President Trump is taking a "shoot first, ask questions later" approach. It reminds me of his recent backward walk of words diminishing our NATO allies and his brash capitulating performance in Helsinki.

Closer to home, our continent has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape our trade deals that have resulted in lowered wages for the American people. Starting with NAFTA, we must re-create agreements that raise wages and lift up workers in our Nation and across the world.

Current trade deals exact huge profits for transnational companies that outsource jobs but continue the race to the bottom on wages for workers. So far, Trump's unsteady actions on trade just create more chaos, with businesses putting hiring plans on hold or scaling back whole projects because of their confusion about tariffs. Is his trade rhetoric producing a good outcome for the American people or is it just continuing the red ink of worse trade deficits, suppressed wages, and rising costs for consumers?

According to the PayScale Index, the paychecks of working Americans have fallen 1.4 percent just since 2017 when you adjust for the rising costs of essentials like healthcare, prescription drugs, gas, and groceries. In fact, wages have fallen, actually, 9.3 percent since 2006, as costs go up and up and up but wages stay flat or go down for so many families.

This is not what the American people were promised. They were promised bigger paychecks, more reshoring of jobs—remember Carrier in Indiana—better trade deals, and a President who was on their side. So far, we have just unfulfilled promises and confusion.

NAFTA negotiations press on, but there is concern President Trump will

go the way of his recent NATO meeting. Reports from his trade ambassador seem encouraging, but will this administration follow through on its promises to turn NAFTA into a job-insourcing deal? If his promise to fix healthcare or promises that the GOP tax giveaway to the top 1 percent would raise wages is any indication, then count me as a sceptic.

Since NAFTA's passage in 1993, there has not been a single year in which our Nation has achieved a trade balance with Mexico or Canada. These massive billion-dollar trade deficits power the harmful push of living-wage jobs beyond our borders and reduction in our wages. This low wage race to the bottom pits our workers against those making poverty-level wages in other nations.

Talk is cheap, Mr. President. In Ohio, people judge people by their actions. Words aren't enough to help working families. Our workers and the middle class that powers this country should not be the victim of an ill-thought-out trade war or attacks on our allies.

President Trump, listen to the people in places like Ohio, in both the industrial and agricultural sectors. Listen to the voters who took a chance on you because of trade. More trade chaos is not the path we were promised.

Renegotiate a NAFTA that will result in trade balances, insourcing of jobs to this country with higher paying jobs in our country and rising wages for our workers, and with continental efforts to gain stability working with our trade partners in both Canada and Mexico. That is what a renegotiated NAFTA should look like. Let's hope we get it.

RECOGNIZING PAUL KRUSS AND HUSSAIN MOHAMMED

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Paul Kruss and Hussain Mohammed on their recent recognition by Boys Town Jerusalem.

Paul and Mo are the proprietors of Mo's Bagels and Deli located in beautiful south Florida. Although some may know these two for serving up some of the best bagels and lox in Aventura, many know them for their world-class philanthropy and community involvement.

Most recently, Paul and Mo have joined forces to support Boys Town Jerusalem, a phenomenal academic institution transforming the lives of disadvantaged boys into productive members of Israeli society.

Whether it be involvement in local causes at home or ensuring success for the next generations abroad, Paul and Mo's dedication and commitment to helping those who need it the most is unwavering. Paul Kruss and Hussain Mohammed are champions of noble

causes, champions for Israel, and champions for our south Florida community.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud of the work accomplished by Paul and by Mo, and I congratulate them on this much-deserved recognition by Boys Town Jerusalem.

Mazel tov, amigos.

RECOGNIZING THOIS KIEL AND MARGARET YAEGER

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two exceptional members of our community in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who are working to make life better for homeless youth throughout our community.

Thois Kiel and Margaret Yaeger, residents of Neshaminy Manor Nursing Home, both decided to create a community outreach project in order to give back to those in need. Working together, they knit a large red and black afghan one square at a time before connecting them and presenting it to Robert "Woody" Wood of the Synergy Project of Bucks County, an organization that seeks to assist and counsel homeless youth and young adults.

Mr. Speaker, we commend Thois and Margaret for their compassion for our community's most vulnerable members and for their work to improve lives with such a personal touch.

I would also like to thank Neshaminy Manor's assistant director of activities, Heather O'Donnell, for all of her work in facilitating outreach projects, and Woody Wood for his work in bettering the lives of homeless youth in our community.

RECOGNIZING BACKYARD BEANS COFFEE COMPANY

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a small business in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, that was recently recognized as Business of the Month by the Lansdale Borough Council.

Backyard Beans Coffee Company started in the backyard of co-owners Matt and Laura Adams with only a Weber grill and one goal in mind: to create high-quality, dynamic coffee and coffee products.

Located on West Main Street in Lansdale, Backyard Beans Coffee takes community responsibility personally and works diligently to ensure it is using products that are not only sourced responsibly and ethically but that also promote sustainability.

To date, Backyard Beans' popular roasts, which source beans from Central America, Africa, South America, and Asia, are sold in nearly 100 restaurants and retail locations, along with regional farmers' markets.

I applaud Matt and Laura for contributing to an already thriving community of businesses in Montgomery County, and we congratulate Backyard

Beans Coffee Company on their recognition as Business of the Month.

RECOGNIZING BENT METAL CUSTOMS

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a small business in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, that was recently recognized as Business of the Month by the Lansdale Borough Council.

Bent Metal Customs, located on West Third Street in Lansdale, was founded in 2002 in Hatfield before moving to its current, larger location. A classic car restoration shop, Bent Metal Customs specializes in vehicle customization and restoration.

□ 1030

Bent Metal Customs has influenced the motor vehicle industry in Montgomery County and beyond. Publications, such as Street Trucks, Chevy High Performance, and Diesel World, have all featured the work of Bent Metal Customs. The quality work of its employees has drawn customers from as far as Michigan and Florida, and is even showcased yearly at an auto show in Las Vegas, Nevada.

I would like to recognize Bent Metal Customs' owner, Justin Brenner, for this distinction, and thank him and the entire Bent Metal Customs family for their contributions to our local economy and community.

PRESIDENT TRUMP MUST STEP DOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read an op-ed from former EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman, who worked for Richard Nixon and George Bush:

President Trump's disgraceful performance in Helsinki, Finland, and, in the days since, is an indication that he is not fit to remain in office. Trump's 2016 "America First" platform might be more aptly named "Russia First" after the disaster that occurred last week.

Trump's turn toward Russia is indefensible. I am a lifelong Republican. I have campaigned and won as a member of the party, and I have served more than one Republican President. My Republican colleagues—once rightfully critical of President Obama's engagement strategy with Russia leader Vladimir Putin—have to end their willful ignorance of the damage Trump is doing, both domestically and internationally. We must put aside the GOP label, as hard as that may be, and demonstrate the leadership our country needs by calling on the President to step down.

Trump's sycophantic relationship with Putin is unsurprising given his previous comments about Russia and its dictator. What is shocking is how long he has possessed, and disregarded, hard evidence of Putin's direct role in undermining our elections. According to New York Times reporting, he saw dispositive emails and texts early in January 2017.

Trump's repeated public dismissals of the intelligence coming from his own deputies is deeply disturbing. Along with his walk back

of statements last week, and then walking back the walk backs, it's impossible to keep up, and his behavior warrants a fresh evaluation of whether the President can be trusted with the future of the United States.

His apologists will argue that the current outcry is just another attempt by moderates and "establishment" Republicans to discredit the President. But what does this man have to say or do for his supporters to finally see that his actions are detrimental to the country?

We must put aside the GOP label, as hard as that may be, and demonstrate the leadership our country needs.

Trump's avowed respect for the word of a dictator who has spent decades undermining the U.S. and its allies is utterly dangerous. Putin is not our ally. Despite the President's dismal attempt to change the narrative by explaining that he misspoke in Helsinki, the pattern is clear: As a candidate and as President, he has constantly praised Putin just as he has constantly undercut the core of our democracy: the courts, the media, and the FBI. He has a history of discrediting members of his own Cabinet and the agencies they lead. These are not the actions of someone who should be navigating delicate diplomatic discussions and setting foreign policy.

If the President did genuinely misspeak on Monday, it demonstrates his inability to articulate accurately U.S. foreign policy at the highest level, for the highest stakes. As the leader of the free world—as ridiculous as that title sounds when applied to Trump—his words matter. If he cannot take his place at a podium next to an adversarial foreign leader and stand up for America's interests and principles, he should not be President.

Trump has alienated our true allies in Europe and undermined the United States' reputation as a consistent, reliable moral force for good in the world. He disdains democracies and admires dictatorships. What appears to matter to him is not what leaders represent but how they flatter him. North Korea's Kim Jong Un and Putin have cracked that code and fan Trump's ego in a way that respected heads of state do not.

Yet many Republicans continue to defend him. In this election year, opposing Trump is risky for GOP candidates. Invoking the need to choose country over party is an overused trope. But it is essential now.

The Republican majority in Congress can fully implement promised sanctions against Russia to show its opposition to Russia's meddling in our election. Putin needs economic growth in Russia because it benefits the oligarchy. Tougher, tangible sanctions would weaken him and hurt those who benefit from his power. House Speaker PAUL RYAN indicated earlier this week that additional sanctions were on the table. This would be a start.

Congress can also ensure that the Robert S. Mueller, III, investigation is not compromised. Any interference in it after this week should raise many red flags. The special counsel and his team, who, despite the President's attacks, show every sign of unbiased professionalism, need to finish their work without tampering.

Finally, even if the Russian efforts to undermine State voting systems were unsuccessful in 2016, this is a vulnerability that may be exploited in the future. With the help of Congress, States must strengthen their processes and security to stop future meddling from Russia or other foreign actors.

Republican voters, including those who supported Donald Trump, have the obligation to demand action from their elected officials. Vocal opposition is expected from Democrats, but it is Republicans' disapproval that will have the most sway on Capitol Hill and at the White House.

Those Members of the party in Congress who have stood up to the President should be commended. More must follow, with more than private talk and tepid tweets. Only bold leadership can put the United States back on a path that values freedom and democracy, and truly puts America first.

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 35 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

Imam Seyed Ali Ghazvini, Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno, Fresno, California, offered the following prayer:

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, in the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful, Almighty God, I thank You for having led me to this great Nation, whose history of welcoming immigrants makes it possible for me to give today's prayer. I thank You for inspiring our Founding Fathers and the governments that followed to acknowledge civil liberties and minority rights.

I ask You, God, to bless the Members of this Hall, and I pray that You continue to inspire our elected officials so that their decisions meet Your approval. I pray that You inspire them to continue to uphold the democratic values of fairness and compassion that have made our Nation great, so that no one seeking refuge from war is banned from stepping on our soil based on faith affiliation or race, so that desperate families seeking refuge are not separated.

God, empower our lawmakers to promote peace, starting in our own cities and emanating to the rest of the world.

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 Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SCHNEIDER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING IMAM SEYED ALI GHAZVINI

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and it is my honor and privilege to welcome Imam Ghazvini as the guest chaplain to the United States House of Representatives.

For the past 14 years, Seyed Ali Ghazvini has served as imam, or spiritual leader, of the Islamic Cultural Center in Fresno, a very important Islamic center in the San Joaquin Valley.

In addition to leading prayers and Qur'anic study, the Imam Ghazvini has distinguished himself as a prominent, prominent community leader. Since the beginning of his ministry, the imam has worked intently to facilitate meaningful interfaith dialogue and understanding throughout the valley, among all religions.

As the co-chair of the Interfaith Alliance of Central California, he has brought together numerous religious and social justice organizations to host mixed-faith events and spread tolerance and inclusivity throughout the San Joaquin Valley. I know because I have had the wonderful pleasure and honor to participate.

It has been with great honor, again, that many of us who have been able to participate in these interdenominational meetings have witnessed a renewed commitment to social justice firsthand. I urge my colleagues to welcome me in joining him and in thanking him this morning for his opening prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

PLANO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARDED 2018 CHAMBER OF THE YEAR

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that the cities of north Texas are frequently named some of the best places to live in the whole country. Of course, this is no surprise to the folks who live there.

There are many reasons that north Texas continues to draw people and businesses to the area. These reasons include good schools and low taxes, but people are also attracted to our business-friendly environment. In fact, just last week, the Plano Chamber of Commerce was nationally recognized as the

2018 Chamber of the Year. Now, that has to be outstanding.

I want to congratulate Jamee Jolly, the president of the Plano Chamber, as well as the entire Plano Chamber of Commerce team, for all your hard work to make our business community such a thriving success.

God bless you, and I salute you.

PALESTINIAN CHILDREN

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

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, over the past decade, Congress has provided Israel with more than \$30 billion in security assistance. Israel's security is important, but according to UNICEF, Israel is the only country in the world that systematically uses its military to arrest, interrogate, and imprison children—Palestinian children—some as young as 12 years old. Countless cases of mistreatment, solitary confinement, and forced confessions have been documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and our own State Department.

We must ensure that no U.S. tax dollars are supporting the mistreatment and abuse of Palestinian children. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 4391, a bill to prohibit U.S. funds from supporting Israel's violent military detention and abuse of Palestinian children.

This abuse must stop. Peace in the Middle East can be achieved only by ensuring Israel's security, respecting human rights, and promoting equality and justice for all Palestinians.

U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE PLAYS CRITICAL ROLE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

(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, today at 12:30, the U.S. Institute of Peace will offer an educational briefing for Members and staff on the Institute's role in reducing violent conflict abroad. As a strong supporter of the U.S. Institute of Peace, I am pleased to welcome President Nancy Lindborg to the Hill today. She will explain the history and relevance of the Institute's congressional mission and how it helps our country find non-violent solutions to international conflicts.

President Lindborg will provide an update on the Institute's programs and how its training and educational functions are building long-term capacities for nonviolent conflict resolution that help countries solve their own problems. She will be joined by colleagues, who will provide policy updates and explain how the Institute's efforts are having an impact in both Africa and the Middle East.

In 1984, the U.S. Institute of Peace was created by Congress as an independent, nonpartisan institute to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent international conflict.

Mr. Speaker, conflict management and resolution skills are essential in today's volatile international security environment, and I am grateful for the Institute's work.

HOLD SUDAN ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE MURDER OF JOHN GRANVILLE

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have proudly stood before this House on many occasions to honor the life and legacy of south Buffalo native John Granville. John was a young diplomat with the United States Agency for International Development and, tragically, was murdered by Islamic extremists in Khartoum, Sudan, in 2008.

At the time of his death, John was working with the people of South Sudan to prepare them for elections and their eventual independence as the newest country in the world in 2011.

A decade after John's death, the Granville family is still fighting the international justice system to hold the Government of Sudan accountable for his death.

The Trump administration's Department of State is now considering removing Sudan from the list of state-sponsored terrorists. If the State Department allows for that removal, Sudan's responsibility for John's death and the escape of his convicted murderers must be a condition for the State Department's action in this matter.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF EASTON AIRPORT

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Easton/Newnam Field Airport on its 75th anniversary. Easton Airport on Maryland's Eastern Shore is a fixture in the Talbot County community and celebrates a rich and patriotic history.

Originally constructed by the military during World War II, the Easton Airport was used as one of the hundreds of bases for military planes patrolling the East Coast for Nazi submarines. After the war, the Federal Government sold the Easton Airport, and others like it, to the local jurisdictions in which they were located for just \$1.

Since the end of World War II, the Easton Airport has grown to be one of the busiest general aviation facilities in Maryland, serving local businesses, the military, corporate pilots, and aviation enthusiasts.

Congratulations to the Easton Airport on this tremendous anniversary, and cheers to another 75 years of serving Talbot County, the State of Maryland, and the United States of America.

ELECTION SECURITY LETTER

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, Special Counsel Robert Mueller indicted 12 Russian intelligence operatives for their activities hacking Democratic email and computer networks during the 2016 election.

In Illinois, our State Board of Elections was also targeted and its voter registration database breached. Data on tens of thousands of Illinois voters was taken. This breach and the taking of voter data is an unacceptable, malicious attack on our Nation and its people.

We must not only hold the attackers accountable; we need to ensure that attacks on our next election are defended against. Personally, I have met with county clerks for the district I represent, and I know they are taking action, treating this threat seriously.

We need to ensure that our Federal Government is responding with the same level of urgency. That is why, today, I led my Illinois colleagues in a letter requesting a briefing from the Department of Justice on their election security efforts in our State.

Protecting the integrity of our election is fundamental to our democracy. I urge the Department of Justice to work with Illinois to secure our election infrastructure and prepare for this serious national threat.

ABIY AHMED ALI REVIVES ETHIOPIAN REFORMS

(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, Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali has made positive changes in the country since his April inauguration. Prime Minister Ali has released thousands of political prisoners and ended a state of emergency.

Critically, Dr. Abiy has stated that Ethiopia will fully comply with the Algiers Agreement, the peace agreement signed for the formal end of the war of 12 years between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which, gruesomely, has killed more than 100,000 people.

Prime Minister Abiy's leadership and initiative to personally visit with the Eritrean leadership and offer direct airline routes has melted away a nearly 18-year cold war between the two states.

The United States will continue to support Prime Minister Abiy's diplomatic outreach and reform, which will

also contribute to regional stability. New hope and opportunity with free market reforms are now available to the people of Ethiopia.

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

Welcome, Pastor John Hagee and Christians United for Israel, to Washington, addressed last night by Ambassador Nikki Haley.

FLINT WATER CRISIS IS NOT OVER

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my House colleagues who visited my hometown of Flint, Michigan, last week to get an update on the city's ongoing water crisis. I want to specifically thank Leader NANCY PELOSI; Assistant Democratic Leader JIM CLYBURN; Representatives BARBARA LEE, JIM MCGOVERN, DENNY HECK, DWIGHT EVANS, JARED HUFFMAN; and, of course, the members of the Michigan delegation, including SANDY LEVIN, BRENDA LAWRENCE, and DEBBIE DINGELL. I want to thank them all for visiting Flint.

I appreciate all my colleagues who have come to Flint to visit with families, and I am especially grateful that Congress passed much-needed help for this community as it struggles to overcome this water crisis.

Today, there is progress in Flint, thanks to this body. Nearly 7,000 of those dangerous lead pipes have been replaced so far using the Federal funds that we provided.

The recovery does continue. The Flint water crisis has faded from the national headlines, and this congressional delegation is a reminder that the crisis isn't over. That visit was an opportunity for us to hear directly from families that there is still much to be done.

What happened in Flint is not some anomaly. It is a warning to the rest of the country and to this Congress that we have to do more to rebuild America's critical infrastructure. Otherwise, we run the risk of more Flint, Michigans to come.

□ 1215

GIVING AMERICANS MORE CHOICES ON HEALTHCARE EXPENSE SAVINGS

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

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of giving Americans more choices when deciding how to save for healthcare expenses.

The legislation we are voting on this week will increase the number of Americans who are eligible to contribute to tax-free health savings ac-

counts and expand the use of HSAs to cover direct primary care and over-the-counter medicines.

HSAs make it easier for people to take a proactive approach to their own healthcare. It is time to give Americans more access and more choice and affordability when spending their hard-earned paychecks.

Our legislation will also reduce premiums, roll back burdensome ObamaCare regulations, and give Americans more options and control when dealing with personal issues of healthcare.

I look forward to casting my vote for all Missouri, especially those in Missouri's Second Congressional District. They deserve the freedom to do what is best for their families.

RECOGNIZING PUBLIC SAFETY AIRCREWS

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a group of unsung heroes who help keep our country and communities safe.

Public safety aircrews fly every day across the Nation to ensure the safety of our domestic airspace, often in very hazardous conditions. They also support first responders during disaster response and rescue missions throughout the country.

We honor the commitment of those public servants, both past and present, and recognize that some have made the ultimate sacrifice. It is only fitting that a day be set aside to honor the thousands of public servants, both past and present, who have served.

To this end, I introduce H. Res. 991, to recognize June 26 of each year as National Public Safety Aviation Day.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 184, PROTECT MEDICAL INNOVATION ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6311, INCREASING ACCESS TO LOWER PREMIUM PLANS AND EXPANDING HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS ACT OF 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1011 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1011

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 184) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on

the bill, as amended, and on any further 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 Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 6311) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-83 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further 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 Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), 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. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, 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 gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1011 provides for the consideration of two bills aimed at removing some of the most burdensome aspects of the Affordable Care Act, and, as a result, moving toward lowering healthcare costs for the millions of Americans who are confronted daily with rising premiums, rising deductibles, and rising drug prices.

With each bill, we take one step closer to ultimately eliminating the Affordable Care Act's government-run approach to healthcare and return to a market-driven solution that puts patients first.

The first bill in today's rule, H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act of 2017, would repeal the excise tax on medical devices imposed on American companies by the previously mentioned Affordable Care Act.

The second bill in today's rule, H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health

Savings Accounts Act of 2018, expands the availability and the use of health savings accounts to allow individuals and their families to save their own money and budget for the healthcare needs they have that otherwise would not be part of their budget.

Today's resolution provides for a closed rule for H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act of 2017. This is the standard practice for a tax-related measure on the House floor. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member on the Committee on Ways and Means. The rule does provide the minority with the customary motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The second part of today's resolution provides for a closed rule for H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The customary motion to recommit with or without instructions is provided to the minority.

This week, Republicans in the House continue our efforts to increase more healthcare options while driving down premiums in the individual market. According to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services, premiums on the exchange are 105 percent higher, on average, in calendar year 2017, compared to premiums in the individual market in calendar year 2013, which was the last year before the Affordable Care Act took effect.

It is important that we continue to address the negative impact that the Affordable Care Act has had on the individual market and to help Americans across the country be more in charge of their healthcare purchases.

Thus far, the Republican Congress has been successful in nullifying the individual mandate, repealing the Independent Payment Advisory Board, and delaying many of the harmful taxes on American businesses and American consumers. I am also encouraged by the actions of the administration in permitting more low-cost limited duration insurance plans and allowing access to association health plans for more small businesses.

These are choices that are provided to the American people so that they, the American people, can be in the driver's seat, not the other way around with the ACA's government-approved one-size-fits-all healthcare model.

With that in mind, two bills we are considering this week seek to expand and improve health savings accounts. Under the current rule, H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plan and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018, will enhance the benefit of tax-preferred health accounts so that individuals can better

plan and save for their healthcare needs, and, also, these individuals will see lower premiums on their healthcare plans.

For the last several Congresses, I have argued to improve the utility of health savings accounts, and so I am pleased to see that these important policies are being advanced through the House this week.

In addition to offering health insurance, many employers often arrange to reimburse their employees and their dependants some of their medical expenses that are not covered by health insurance. Health flexible spending accounts and health reimbursement arrangements are two of the more common arrangements offered by employers.

I have heard the frustration of employees, many of whom are my constituents in north Texas, over forfeiting the remaining amounts in their flexible spending account at the end of each plan year. We can all agree that the healthcare needs and purchases vary from year to year, where one year a person may have more medical expenses than the next or the other way around.

One of the provisions in H.R. 6311 eliminates the arbitrary "use it or lose it" rule and allows flexible spending account balances to be carried over to the next plan year within a reasonable annual flexible spending account contribution limit.

Another provision allows working seniors that are covered under an HSA-eligible high deductible health plan and enrolled in Medicare part A to continue to contribute to their health savings account. Just because someone becomes eligible for Medicare because of age, they should not be prohibited from continuing to contribute to a health savings account.

Under current law, there are annual health savings account contribution limits. In 2018, the limit for an individual was \$3,450. For families, that amount was \$6,900. While these limits are updated annually for inflation, they are significantly less than the combined limit on annual out-of-pocket deductible expenses.

H.R. 6311 would allow individuals to increase their contributions to equal to the combined annual limit on the out-of-pocket and deductible expenses under their HSA-qualified insurance plan. That would be \$6,550 for an individual and \$13,300 for a family this year.

The Affordable Care Act limits the option of individuals enrolled in bronze and so-called copper, or catastrophic, plans to make HSA contributions. Also, only those under 30 or those that qualify for a hardship exemption are actually able to purchase the so-called copper health plan. That is a 50 percent actuarial value health plan.

So, today, I am pleased that a bill that I introduced with Representative ROSKAM, H.R. 6314, the Health Savings Act of 2018, to expand the eligibility

and the access to health savings accounts by allowing plans categorized as catastrophic and bronze plans in the individual and small group markets to qualify for HSA contributions. That is included in this bill.

Lastly, I appreciate working with the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee Chairman PETER ROSKAM on H.R. 6311. One of the key provisions of the bill is to provide an off-ramp from ObamaCare's rising premiums and limited choices by allowing the premium tax credit to be used for qualified plans offered outside of the law's exchanges and healthcare.gov.

In addition, it expands access to the lowest premium plans available, so-called copper or catastrophic plans, for all individuals purchasing coverage in the individual market and allows the premium tax credit to be used to offset the cost of such plans.

□ 1230

I recognize not everyone will choose to have a health savings account, but they should have the option because HSAs represent a powerful tool to lower prices and improve access to quality care for everyone, and those are goals that we can all share.

Now, it is well documented that many of the provisions contained within the Affordable Care Act have negative consequences on patients, both in access to care and in affordability. One of the provisions that has been universally criticized is that, on a large, bipartisan nature, its repeal was called for almost immediately after the passage of the Affordable Care Act. This is the tax on medical device manufacturers, or more commonly referred to as the medical device tax.

It seems illogical that within a piece of legislation that was purported to make medical care available, more accessible to all Americans, the Federal Government would want to tax the very providers of medical innovation that create devices to improve the delivery of healthcare, but, nevertheless, that is exactly what happened when ObamaCare passed in 2010, and it was done as a means to pay for the astronomical price tag that accompanied the Affordable Care Act.

This tax burden is unfair, and it actually increases costs that consumers pay at their doctors' offices. The tax has also been cited by dozens of medical device manufacturers who have or are considering moving their operations overseas so that they can continue to innovate without the heavy burden of this tax stifling their growth. This tax slows the creation of new techniques and devices, which will make the delivery of medicine more efficient, and it puts at risk the jobs that were created by the creation of such devices.

For anyone who thinks that we are merely talking about the largest and most expensive pieces of technology found within a hospital—basically, your MRI, CAT scans, and some surgical equipment—let's be clear that

this tax covers every piece of medical equipment, from those large machines to the smallest of items, including syringes used to deliver lifesaving antibiotics and vaccines. It continues to negatively impact a number of constituents in my district and, I am certain, in districts around the country, and it does continue to create a burden on a number of companies.

The medical device tax has led to the elimination of thousands of good-paying jobs, and repealing it would be the first step to bringing those jobs back and stem the loss of future jobs within this vital industry that is helping to mitigate rising costs of healthcare due to the burdensome provisions within the Affordable Care Act.

This is a tax on business, a tax on consumers, and a tax on innovation. To date, 33,000 jobs have been lost in the medical device industry since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, and it is projected that over 130,000 additional jobs are on the chopping block.

Why would anyone be surprised about this? Excise taxes—and that is what this is, an excise tax—are meant to lead to a reduction in the consumption of the goods being taxed. We place an excise tax on cigarettes. We want to discourage people from smoking. We make it burdensome to afford a smoking habit.

Did we really intend, with the passage of the Affordable Care Act by congressional Democrats in 2010, to make it more burdensome to use more efficient medical devices?

H.R. 184 has bipartisan, bicameral support, with currently 277 cosponsors. Republican leadership in the House has heard this request and heard the calls from many Members within this body and is moving this bill in a responsible way to put Americans back to work and lower healthcare costs for all.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support today's rule and the underlying bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to debate this rule, but I would urge my colleague from Texas to be mindful that this ain't going nowhere, so we really are, when all is said and done, wasting our time. This is not likely to be taken up by the Senate in August, and why we are not doing other things, I simply cannot understand.

The Protect Medical Innovation Act and the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act are worth considering. The gentleman from Texas certainly is an expert in this area and is most sincere. It is regrettable that the legislation, ultimately, that will pass the House of Representatives ain't going nowhere.

Taken together, these measures do nothing to ameliorate the Republican

attempt to eviscerate the Affordable Care Act, do nothing to curb rising drug costs, and do nothing to curtail skyrocketing premium hikes. Instead, H.R. 6311 continues the Republican majority's destructive path of undermining and destabilizing our health insurance markets.

This package of six bills will likely lead to fewer choices and competition for moderate- and low-income families who do not have the disposable income to pay premium costs up front.

In bringing up the second measure, H.R. 184, my friends across the aisle seem intent on ignoring the pressing issues facing our country, like passing sensible legislation that will address the country's ongoing gun violence epidemic, passing legislation that will protect our election infrastructure from hostile foreign hacking, or passing legislation that will help reunite the more than 2,500 separated children with their families. Rather, the Republican majority wants to waste valuable legislative time in repealing a tax that won't even be active until 2020.

This is the last week before we go on a 5-week recess and we are doing nothing. Even worse, these bills are not offset and, taken together with tomorrow's bills, will add up to \$90 billion to our deficit. They are not paid for. And I challenge my colleague on the floor handling this rule to tell me where the pay-fors are, and, if there are none, why are they not paid for—\$90 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that the epidemic of gun violence that plagues our communities must be addressed in a comprehensive manner and without further delay. Unfortunately, our Nation has witnessed far too many senseless deaths caused each day by firearms, and that continues to rise.

Under a Republican majority, many commonsense reforms, such as the assault weapons ban—and somebody please tell me why anyone other than the military and law enforcement needs an assault weapon; I just, for the life of me, cannot understand it—were allowed to expire. I might add, flood insurance is getting ready to expire. We are not taking that measure up.

Providing nearly unfettered access to a variety of firearms does not make any sense. Someone said to me, well, there are 103 kinds of automatic weapons; and I say ban them all because they don't have any business in the hands of people in the streets at all.

While we need to preserve the rights of responsible gun owners—and I am one of them; I believe in the Second Amendment—we must focus more of our attention and efforts on keeping weapons out of the hands of dangerous individuals instead of attacking and undermining the healthcare for millions of hardworking Americans.

While the present administration works to further the majority's aim of dismantling the most popular aspects of the Affordable Care Act, like keeping children on their parents' health insurance until the age of 26 and pro-

tecting people with preexisting conditions, these bills continue to balloon Federal spending and deficits.

While we were promised increased revenue from the GOP tax cuts of 2017, with the GOP falling back on tired talking points like tax cuts paying for themselves, we now have the Congressional Budget Office projecting over \$1 trillion in budget deficits in 2020, even before legislation like this passes.

Whatever happened to the conservative Republicans? Where did the fiscal conservative Republicans go, who are blowing up the deficit in this country? The amount of fiscal irresponsibility demonstrated by my friends across the aisle is shocking and will be a great detriment to all Americans in the future.

Moreover, these pieces of legislation do nothing to holistically solve the most pressing concerns hardworking Americans have with healthcare: ever-increasing premiums, unstable health markets, and exploding drug costs. In fact, in the last year and a half, the majority has gone out of their way to destabilize health markets as much as they can.

Instead of encouraging Americans to enroll in health insurance, the Department of Health and Human Services has created an advertising campaign explicitly undermining the individual insurance markets created under the Affordable Care Act. Republicans have cut the Department's budget for those grassroots organizations whose sole purpose is to assist folks in signing up for health insurance. How much of the budget did they cut? 92 percent.

In addition to this, HHS has threatened States that try to lower premiums, and the Trump administration has even canceled cost-sharing reduction payments to insurers, which the CBO projects will leave 1 million more people uninsured, raise premiums by 20 to 25 percent over the next 2 years, and increase the Federal deficit by \$200 billion.

Listen, people, when we started this business of the Affordable Care Act—as much as my friends on the other side who have the prerogative, in the majority, to be in disagreement with this measure as well as any others and to offer this thing that ain't going nowhere here today—the simple fact of the matter is, some few years back, we had 42 million Americans who were uninsured. We now have more than 42 million Americans uninsured, and that is wrong.

I said yesterday in the Rules Committee, all of us, 535—the Senate and the House—and the six delegates, ought to be locked up up here until we come up with a sensible solution for the American people with reference to a crisis.

It was said yesterday by the chair of this committee that the plan that is going to be offered—that we did offer and then they voted against—would be the best healthcare plan in the world. Well, it ain't the best healthcare plan

in the world. The best healthcare plans in the world are in Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia, and a whole bunch of other places other than America.

And while the Trump administration has pushed junk healthcare plans, even the organizations that originally lobbied the administration for access to these plans now say they no longer want to use them.

All in all, as a result of these policies, as I have indicated, 4 million fewer Americans have health insurance than when Donald John Trump took office, and healthcare costs continue to rise unabated.

I need not remind my colleagues that people in the United States pay far more for healthcare than in any other industrialized nation on Earth, and, in most cases, they get far less. We spend over 18 percent of our gross domestic product on healthcare, compared to most other countries, which spend less than 10 percent, with much of the disparity occurring thanks to higher drug prices and administrative overhead.

□ 1245

Despite the money we pour into our healthcare, the United States has the shortest life expectancy and highest infant mortality of any modern industrialized nation—let me repeat that—the shortest life expectancy, and the highest infant mortality of any modern industrialized nation.

We have far fewer physicians—and we had better do something about that; not in this measure, not in the Affordable Healthcare Act. We had better get busy trying to figure out how to provide more physicians, more nurses, more research for a variety of measures that are oncoming that our Nation is going to be confronted with.

We have fewer hospital beds and, in perhaps what is the most depressing statistic of all of U.S. healthcare, the United States is one of only 13 countries in the world where the rate of maternal mortality, defined as the death of a mother in the year after she gives birth, is now worse than it was 25 years ago.

And here we are, continuing to jaw jack about something that ain't going nowhere, and we have situations in our country that all of us know something about, all of us care about. There is no Republican in the House or Democrat in the House that doesn't care about their constituents and their healthcare. And at the very same time, what we are winding up doing is arguing with each other and nothing is getting done, and that is just dead wrong for this country.

Black women, in particular, are three times more likely to die from health-related issues to their pregnancy. How can we seemingly pay for more healthcare now than at any point in our Nation's history and, yet, at the same time, be getting worse care than we were decades ago?

We have a fundamentally broken system. The majority doesn't seem to

have any way of fixing it, and I am not even sure that they want to fix it. Indeed, they seem to be going out of their way making it somehow worse.

Now I hear all of the voices out there. I had a constituent call the other day to tell me that I wasn't as liberal as his people were, liberal, and that I didn't understand this whole healthcare system.

And I told him: Listen, man, in 1992, when I ran for office, I ran on the premise of universal healthcare for every American, period. And when we did the Affordable Healthcare Act, it ultimately got called the ObamaCare Act.

I have said in the Rules Committee repeatedly, it probably should have been called the Hastings/ObamaCare Act, or perhaps we would have done what Dr. BURGESS asked us to do and it would be called the Burgess Healthcare Act.

I don't care what it is called. It needs to be called something that is going to help every American, and not just a handful, and certainly not the richest people in this country who don't even need any healthcare. They have been at the socialized healthcare business for all of their lives and, therefore, people like Donald John Trump don't need to worry about this kind of thing.

It is those people that are vulnerable. It is those people on Medicaid in Florida and other States that didn't expand Medicaid, 900,000 of them in my State, that are left to the mercies of the system.

And what do they do? All of us know what they do. When they have healthcare, they go to the hospital, to the emergency room, generally speaking, they are treated, and then those taxpayers in those respective jurisdictions wind up paying for it.

So why don't we get our act together and try to do something about it now?

I have proudly advocated for multiple pieces of legislation that will improve and strengthen the Medicare system, including H.R. 676, the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act, which will provide all individuals residing in the United States and the United States territories, with affordable healthcare, including that which is medically most necessary, such as primary and preventative care, dietary and nutritional therapies, prescription drugs, emergency care, long-term care, mental health services, dental services, and vision care. Underscore preventative care. And if we did more in that arena, we wouldn't have as much of a problem as we do today.

Medicare for All will save taxpayers hundreds of dollars a month. Now, I firmly believe that we must focus priorities in the interest of the American people to ensure that our citizens have continued access to healthcare services.

So when we come back here in September, when we finish all of our fighting in November, and we have somebody that is going to get elected, 435 of

us will return here and be sworn in in January. Let's all make a commitment that we are going to work together, together, to get all of the resources, the tremendous minds, the incredible staffs that work here in this institution together, and try to make sure that we do the right thing by the American people and pass a measure that will cause everyone to have affordable care.

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

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

The gentleman is quite correct in identifying the other body as sometimes an obstacle to good public policy, for it was 1 year ago that the other body blocked a health care reform that this body had passed the previous May.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw the House's attention to an article in today's Wall Street Journal. The title of the article is "TrumpCare beats ObamaCare." And I just want to quote a little bit from this article.

To set the stage, in December, with the repeal of the individual mandate, and quoting here: "But while many people didn't realize it at the time, it turns out that Mr. Trump has been helping to improve an important source of insurance coverage since virtually the moment he took office."

Continuing to quote here: "By prioritizing economic growth and reducing the tax and regulatory burdens on U.S. business, Mr. Trump has helped create an economy with more job openings than ever before. As if by magic, the invisible hand of a freer marketplace is now generating new benefits as employers compete to fill all those open positions."

Continuing to quote here: "For the first time in six years, the share of U.S. workers offered health insurance through their employer has risen, a sign a tighter labor market is prompting businesses to offer more generous benefits."

So, Mr. Speaker, I simply submit that the activities of the Trump administration have, indeed, improved the healthcare landscape in this country. That is something we should acknowledge and embrace.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule that would change the rules of the House to prevent any legislation from being considered that would reduce the guaranteed benefits for individuals enrolled in either Medicare or Medicaid programs.

I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat

the previous question so that we may protect these critical programs for this generation and the next.

Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared now to advise my colleague from Texas that I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close when, and if, he is.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close as well.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, this place, the people's House, should be about approaching our congressional responsibilities and daily activities in a manner that is fair and respectful to all Americans; in a manner where the appropriate committee of jurisdiction holds hearings and markups; in a manner where experts in the field are respected and consulted; in a manner where Members of both political parties have the ability to offer amendments and debate the contents of bills that come to the House floor.

Unfortunately, in this historically closed-off, Republican run House, that is not the case. And let me make it very clear. Even though in the Ways and Means and the Appropriations Committee, as a matter of practice, we allow for closed rules, we now have, with these three rules that are likely to be finished today, we have 95 closed rules. This is 2018, and not in the history of the people's House has the process been as closed.

When the Speaker of the House of Representatives began this session, he indicated that it would be the most open session that we would have. And yet, it is not the case.

I spoke earlier about immigration, and I saw this morning where the majority leader has determined, even though having promised his own conference that he would have a vote on immigration, he ain't gonna do it.

Now, something is wrong with this process and it needs to be corrected, and we can correct it going forward. We will make 100, and then we will be historically referenced as the most closed Congress in the history of the United States of America.

What we see are my friends across the aisle, bending over backwards to reward a very specific and elite constituency. Week after week, the powerful gun lobby is rewarded as Republican leadership refuses to bring up even the most commonsense gun violence prevention legislation.

The next week, like today, the powerful medical insurance lobby chalks up a win as this Republican-led Congress votes in favor of special interests over the interests of hardworking Americans.

Some other people that make out like bandits that we never talk about are the insurance companies. I could spend a whole hour talking about how they are benefiting while we are about the business of tying each other in knots with verbiage rather than with substantive legislation.

Mr. Speaker, while there is no quick fix to any of these measures, not to

gun violence, opioid addiction, the immigration problems, and ongoing foreign cyber attacks on our election system's infrastructure, we simply must engage in the complicated and difficult process of improving our country's current policies.

I, as well as my colleagues on this side of the aisle, stand ready to work with Members of Congress to bring commonsense legislation to the floor that will benefit all Americans and not just the rarified few.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to urge a "no" vote on the rule and a "no" vote on the previous question. This measure we are debating here today ain't going nowhere, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The gentleman from Florida is making a point about open rules, and I do feel obligated to point out in the 111th Congress—that was the Congress that was the first 2 years of President Obama's administration—in the 111th Congress, under Speaker PELOSI, the majority had zero open rules. That is zero open rules in the 2 years in which we saw the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the passage of Dodd-Frank; the House-passed Waxman/Markey, which was a cap-and-trade global warming bill, so significant pieces of legislation passed the floor of this House, all under closed rules.

But, Mr. Speaker, today's rule brings forward two pieces of legislation that will have a meaningful impact on Americans' healthcare costs, including the premiums and the prices they pay for medicines.

□ 1300

H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act of 2017, which will repeal the Affordable Care Act's ill-conceived medical device tax, and H.R. 6311, the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Account Act of 2018, which will provide greater freedom for Americans to use their own money to pay for medical expenses out of their health savings accounts, both of these build on the House's work over the past 2 years to make healthcare a more patient-centered market.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to thank Representatives PAULSEN and ROSKAM for their work on these measures. I urge my colleagues to support today's rule and move the debate forward on this legislation.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 1011 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS

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

SEC. 3. Rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

“RESTRICTIONS ON CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION THAT WOULD CUT MEDICARE OR MEDICAID.

13. (a) It shall not be in order to consider a bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment,

amendment between the Houses, or conference report which includes any provision described in paragraph (b).

(b) A provision referred to in paragraph (a) is a provision which, if enacted into law, would result in either of the following:

(1) a reduction of guaranteed benefits for individuals entitled to, or enrolled for, benefits under the Medicare program under title XVIII of 18 such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.); or

(2) a reduction of benefits or eligibility for individuals enrolled in, or eligible to receive medical assistance through, a State Medicaid plan or waiver under title XIX of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 5 et seq.).

(c) It shall not be in order to consider a rule or order that waives the application of paragraph (a). As disposition of any point of order under paragraph (a) or this paragraph (except a point of order against an amendment pursuant to paragraph (a)), the Chair shall put the question of consideration with respect to the measure, order, conference report, or rule as applicable. The question of consideration shall be debatable for 10 minutes by the Member initiating the point of order and for 10 minutes by an opponent, but shall otherwise be decided without intervening motion except one that the House adjourn.”

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. BURGESS. 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. HASTINGS. 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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6199, RESTORING ACCESS TO MEDICATION ACT OF 2018, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM JULY 27, 2018, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 3, 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1012 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1012

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 6199) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include certain over-the-counter medical products as qualified medical expenses. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-82 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further 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 Ways and Means; and (2) one

motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. On any legislative day during the period from July 27, 2018, through September 3, 2018—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 4. Each day during the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution shall not constitute a calendar day for purposes of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546).

SEC. 5. Each day during the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution shall not constitute a legislative day for purposes of clause 7 of rule XIII.

SEC. 6. Each day during the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution shall not constitute a calendar or legislative day for purposes of clause 7(c)(1) of rule XXII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES), 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. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, 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 gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1012 provides for the consideration of an important bill to return control of healthcare spending and budgeting back where it belongs: with the patient.

H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018, would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include certain over-the-counter medical products as qualified medical expenses for the purposes of spending one's own dollars within a health savings account.

Today's resolution provides for a rule to allow H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018, the standard practice for a tax-related measure on the House floor. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled between the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The rule does, however, provide the minority with the customary motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Also included in the resolution before us today are the standard provisions

allowing the House of Representatives to continue to operate while Members are home, working with their constituents during the August district work period.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of the rule on H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018. This rule includes the work of various Members of Congress on the important issue of modernizing health savings accounts. While this legislation did not move through the Health Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee, my fellow members on the other Health Subcommittee, that of the Ways and Means Committee, have done quality work in moving this package. Each bill was reported favorably out of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I have long been a supporter of increasing flexibility within our healthcare system, especially through the use of health savings accounts. Health savings accounts allow patients to feel more involved and to have more control over their healthcare spending. As someone who has personally had a health savings account in the past, I believe it to be a powerful tool but that qualified expenses have been limited for too long.

This package will give more power to consumers by allowing them to use their hard-earned savings that they put into their health savings accounts on an expanded number of healthcare goods and services.

The first bill in this package, Promoting High-Value Healthcare Through Flexibility for High-Deductible Health Plans Act, introduced by Chairman ROSKAM, allows for first-dollar coverage flexibility for high-deductible health plans. Many individuals, especially in the post-Affordable Care Act world, have chosen to purchase high-deductible health plans. While this is a reasonable choice for many consumers, there are some who are faced with high out-of-pocket costs.

H.R. 6199 allows health plans to provide coverage for up to \$250 per year for individuals or \$500 per year for families before they meet their deductible. The goal of this provision is to incentivize services that could reduce future healthcare costs, such as primary care visits and telehealth services.

Additionally, under current law, individuals are unable to contribute to an HSA if they participate in a direct primary care service arrangement. Representative ERIK PAULSEN's Primary Care Enhancement Act, which is included in this rule, enables patients to be able to participate in a direct primary care service arrangement and remain qualified to contribute to a health savings account. It also includes direct primary care service arrangement fees as medical expenses.

Some individuals are fortunate enough to receive certain healthcare services at or nearby their workplace through their employer. Representative MIKE KELLY's bipartisan Health

Savings Account Improvement Act of 2018, which is included in this package, addresses this issue.

While it is convenient and helpful to have access to such services, these individuals should not be barred from having a health savings account. This package creates a special rule that individuals can receive free or discounted services offered by their employers on-site or at retail medical clinics. These services may include physical exams, immunizations, nonprescription drugs, treatment of employment-related injuries, drug testing if required as a condition of employment, hearing or vision screenings, or other services that are not considered significant benefits in the nature of medical care.

Mr. Speaker, the post-Affordable Care Act world is riddled with flaws, but one of the biggest problems is its failure to promote consumer-driven healthcare. Expanding the use of health savings accounts could go a long way to reverse this trend. Health savings accounts give consumers incentives to manage their own healthcare costs by coupling a tax-favored savings account used to pay medical expenses with a high-deductible health plan that meets certain requirements for deductibles and out-of-pocket expense limits. The funds in a health savings account are owned by the individual and may be rolled over from year to year.

Health savings accounts are not a novel idea. They have been around since 2004, but current health savings account policy is extraordinarily restrictive, making it harder for consumers to take advantage of it.

I have spent several years in developing extensive reforms to increase the potential for health savings accounts for consumers, and H.R. 6199 includes meaningful improvements that we can, in fact, get across the finish line now to help families now.

One of these improvements is the ability for spouses to contribute to a health savings account under certain circumstances even if their spouse has a flexible spending account. Under current law, one spouse can reimburse expenses for their spouses' and other dependents' medical expenses; therefore, the other spouse is considered to be ineligible for an HSA.

This provision enables the spouse without the flexible spending account to reimburse for medical expenses, with certain restrictions. This is critical, as it gives individuals increased flexibility to save for their own healthcare expenses that a shared flexible spending account for the whole family may not provide.

Additionally, this bill allows for individuals to terminate or convert their flexible spending account and health reimbursement accounts into a health savings account under certain circumstances. Employers would be able to allow their employees to convert their flexible spending account and health reimbursement account bal-

ances into health savings account funds if they enroll in a high-deductible health plan with an HSA. This is critical in empowering patients and allowing them the flexibility to change health plans without losing their savings.

There is a dollar limitation of \$2,650 for conversions for individuals, \$5,300 for families, and the funds transferred into the HSA would count toward the enrollee's HSA contribution for that taxable year.

H.R. 6199, the bill introduced by Representative LYNN JENKINS from Kansas, makes commonsense, patient-centered reforms to help defray costs for individuals. Over-the-counter medications, allergy and cold medicines, antibiotic ointment, and pain relievers are historically ineligible expenditures for HSA and other tax-favored healthcare accounts. The ACA created a requirement in Federal law that forced account holders to go to their doctor to obtain a prescription for over-the-counter medications before purchasing them with their health savings account or flexible spending account. Individuals who fail to jump through these hoops and purchase over-the-counter medications without a prescription, in fact, face a tax penalty for making a nonqualified distribution.

This policy drives unnecessary utilization of doctor services, decreases access to over-the-counter medications, and discourages people from taking control of saving for their healthcare needs. H.R. 6199 repeals this harmful provision, puts consumers back in the driver's seat, and allows them efficient access to appropriate medications.

Lastly, this legislation permits individuals to invest their hard-earned health savings account dollars into their physical fitness and well-being. In many ways, income is a hurdle for individuals and families who would like to participate in a physical activity, whether they would like to pay for a membership at a fitness facility or pay for their children to join a youth sports league. This legislation opens the door for paying for such activities with health savings account dollars.

Known originally as a standalone bill, the Personal Health Investment Today Act, introduced by Representative JASON SMITH, allows qualified sports and fitness expenses to count as qualified medical expenses. These particular expenses are capped at \$500 a year for individuals and \$1,000 on a joint return.

□ 1315

Passage of this provision will assist individuals and families across the Nation in investing in their physical fitness, which can lead them to healthier lives and stave off conditions such as diabetes and obesity. These bills are an important example of the work we are doing right now to advance Member-driven solutions that will improve healthcare for all Americans.

Deductibles, out-of-pocket limitations have been steadily growing. Con-

gress should be taking steps to make it easier for Americans to save, not restricting their options. The rule and the underlying bills included in this package strengthen consumer power and increase flexibility for patients in paying for their medical expenses.

I appreciate all of the work that the Members have put into the provisions of this bill. I urge my colleagues to support today's rule and the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, \$2 trillion, that is what this GOP Congress added to the debt last year when they passed their tax scam, \$2 trillion that has been taken away from our children and grandchildren to give tax breaks to corporations and the very wealthy.

And today, we take up three bills which are estimated to add another \$100 billion. I suppose in comparison to the tax scam, that may be small potatoes, but this is real spending with no offsets and no effort to even try to find an offset. When the 115th Congress finally ends, we will have to put trillions on the Nation's credit card—trillions.

Next year, those of us who may be lucky enough to be back will have the hard task of digging ourselves out of this hole, this wall of debt that will have been created by the 115th Congress. We will have new Members here who will need to deal with the decisions that we are making here today.

Let me tell you about my experience in having to deal with those very irresponsible decisions that put us and pushed us into debt.

In 2008, when I was first elected to the State legislature, I was elected with a wall of debt of \$15 billion. My first 30 days in office, we passed four different budgets, and none of it added up. We simply couldn't pay our bills. We had charged ourselves to a place that we could no longer continue.

No one got paid for 6 or 7 months—no one, not the small contractors doing business with the State of California, not the big contractors, not our State employees, not even the members of the legislature. As a matter of fact, I don't come from money, so every month I took a loan to make my mortgage. And this is where the 115th Congress is leading us today. There are no easy choices.

Mr. Speaker, this rule makes in order H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018. H.R. 6199 claims to restore access to medication and modernizes health savings accounts. This bill makes minor changes that largely favor higher income-earning individuals who can afford to set aside that extra money for things like gym memberships.

This is not, however, the worst bill we have voted on this year. And some

of us may end up even voting for it. After all, I support fixes to the Affordable Care Act. We all do. However, it does not address the destructive actions by President Trump that have disproportionately affected low-income families.

After nearly 70 unsuccessful repeal attempts by this Congress, this administration has, sadly, turned to chipping away at the Affordable Care Act. President Trump has resorted to undoing key provisions of the healthcare law without offering any working fixes, which ultimately puts in jeopardy access to healthcare.

He has eliminated the individual mandate, which alone will increase premiums by 9 or 10 percent, and he is expanding plans that offer slimmer benefits and reduce consumer protection, also known as junk plans, as they cover nothing.

Healthcare plans that can charge you more for being a woman or for being older or for having a preexisting condition, these plans can also outright deny coverage to anyone, putting 130 million Americans' healthcare at risk. Expanding these volatile health plans into the marketplace will also increase premiums between 1 and 4 percent.

Almost a year ago, the Trump administration announced that they were canceling cost-sharing reduction payments which helped nearly 6 million low-income Americans better afford medical services by lowering deductibles and copayments. This alone caused premiums in 2018 to increase by 20 percent, all while this majority won't even try to find a \$100 billion offset. Cutting cost-sharing payments increased the deficit by \$200 billion. The administration also recently cut additional outreach and consumer education dollars to local organizations by \$10 million.

And this is not the first time that they cut these critical dollars. From the very beginning of this administration, millions of dollars in outreach, customer assistance and other help and total enrollment time was cut out. Additionally, we are still waiting on a solution to combat the rising prescription drug crisis, which was promised by this administration.

The increasing cost of prescription drugs in combination with the forecasted increase in medical price inflation will also raise premiums between 5.7 and 6.5 percent next year.

Earlier this month, President Trump announced yet another sabotage: that he will not make the \$10.4 billion in risk adjustment payments, which will also increase premiums. These risk adjustment payments protect consumers by ensuring insurance companies don't cherry-pick between the healthy and the sick.

It was very telling last week when the Ways and Means Committee chairman said that GOP lawmakers were exploring a possible legislative fix to restart the risk adjustment payments that President Trump abruptly sus-

pending. The House GOP leadership knows the harm President Trump is causing. Why don't we do something about it today?

The common theme here is an administration consistently undoing key provisions in our healthcare system, putting Americans' health at risk, increasing premiums, which fall squarely on the shoulders of our families and will add billions of dollars to our deficit.

This isn't the Affordable Care Act. This is TrumpCare. This bill is more of the same. Instead of finding solutions for the families that need it the most, this bill will add \$100 billion to the deficit.

We should be spending our time making positive, meaningful improvements to our existing healthcare system that ensures millions of Americans have access to affordable healthcare coverage.

We should be discussing legislation that puts downward pressure on premiums so families don't have to worry year after year if they will be able to afford healthcare coverage.

We should be helping to stabilize the marketplace so consumers can choose from a variety of options that meet their unique family needs.

Instead, today, we are, sadly, wasting time discussing a bill that fails to address the concerns of millions of Americans.

I am proud to be from California, a State that stands up for their residents to ensure that they have access to healthcare coverage. In fact, California's comprehensive outreach and marketing program was credited with lowering premiums by 6 to 8 percent—real money. California is proof that effective advertising and outreach can increase enrollment, expand coverage, stabilize risk pools, and lower premiums.

But this administration—and through inaction, this Congress—is driving up healthcare prices for every American, including Californians. So we will vote today on this bill, and it will probably pass, and then it will die in the Senate. And while we send the Senate more legislation that they will never take up, Americans will continue to suffer.

Like I said, this isn't a bad bill, but it only benefits 6 percent of Americans—6 percent, not the 14 percent who lack healthcare insurance at all.

We must do more. We must help those who are falling further and further behind while this Congress buries us in debt.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, once again, I want to draw attention to an opinion article in today's Wall Street Journal. The title of the article is "TrumpCare Beats ObamaCare," July 23, 2018, penned by James Freeman.

"By prioritizing economic growth and reducing the tax and regulatory burdens on U.S. business, Mr. Trump

has helped to create an economy with more job openings than ever before. As if by magic, the invisible hand of a freer marketplace is now generating new benefits as employers compete to fill all those open positions."

□ 1330

"For the first time in 6 years, the share of U.S. workers offered health insurance through their employer has risen, a sign a tighter labor market is prompting businesses to offer more generous benefits. . . ."

"The Trump plan is repairing at least some of the damage caused by ObamaCare. Notes the Journal:

"Among all private-sector workers offered medical benefits, 72 percent opted to take them," which is up from the 17 percent in 2010 when it began to decline.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this is to point out that this is all occurring without a new government program. This is because of the strength of the economy. This is what happens when you put the focus on creating good jobs for American workers. This is the benefit that results.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative RUIZ's legislation, H.R. 6479, which will ban junk insurance plans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) to discuss our proposal.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, premiums are skyrocketing across the country, caused by this administration's sabotage of the Affordable Care Act. Just listen to the insurance company CEOs who are directly stating that not funding cost-sharing reductions for point of care for patients who are struggling to pay their bills will increase premiums. And also, by not outreaching to more people and low-risk individuals to come into the insurance pool, they are also increasing the premiums for everybody else.

But rather than making healthcare more affordable for all middle class families, this Congress is focusing on making healthcare more affordable for the wealthy few.

Instead of protecting the 130 million Americans with preexisting conditions, this Congress is sitting idly by as this administration once again allows insurance companies to sell junk plans that don't even cover basic healthcare services.

At a time when we should be stabilizing premiums by supporting risk-adjustment transfers and ACA enrollment outreach, the majority is refusing to act, simply ignoring the anticipated 18 percent increase in premiums for hardworking Americans throughout our country because, rather than help the American people, the majority would rather sabotage the Affordable Care Act for their own political gain.

This is wrong. So I offer the majority and all the Members of the House this choice: Members can support the previous question, ignore the people who will be priced out of healthcare, and ignore all the politically motivated actions by this administration to undermine access to affordable healthcare in our Nation; or Members can defeat the previous question so that we can bring up my bill, H.R. 6479, the Stop Junk Health Plans Act, which will lower costs and will ensure that Americans continue to have access to high-quality, affordable health plans. It is that simple.

You see, in general, there are three out-of-pocket or more than three out-of-pocket costs; in fact, one is the premiums, two is the deductibles, three is the co-pays, and four is the out-of-pocket costs Americans will have to pay if their health insurance doesn't cover those specific services.

So only focusing on premiums is a message deception. You see, with junk plans, that will increase out-of-pocket costs for patients because these junk plans may offer Americans a less expensive premium; however, the deductibles will be too expensive.

Also, if the majority goes after the essential health benefits and allows insurance companies not to cover things like emergency care, mental health, or prescription drugs, then they will be responsible for those out-of-pocket costs.

Also, if the majority does not defend the protections of people with preexisting illness—and insurance companies are now able to discriminate against those with diabetes, heart conditions, asthma, et cetera—then those individuals will have to pay more overall out-of-pocket costs either because they were denied or because health insurance companies will be able to charge them an exorbitant amount of money.

So this is why it is so important to keep patient out-of-pocket costs in perspective and not just focus on the political messaging tools of narrowly focusing on premiums, because someone can buy a low-cost premium health insurance, but, again, if it doesn't cover mental health, prescription drugs, emergency care, or other forms of guaranteed coverage under the Affordable Care Act, then they are going to have to pay that completely out of pocket.

If the majority doesn't protect patients with preexisting illness, then that is 180 million people in this country who have preexisting illnesses who

are going to have to pay more out of pocket.

So, therefore, we must focus and stabilize the health insurance market; we must lower insurance costs by increasing enrollees into the insurance market by low-risk individuals; we must protect essential coverage and protect people with preexisting illness; and we must lower drug prices and the cost of overall care.

I urge all my colleagues to make the right choice—the only choice—that supports the American people, in this case, the out-of-pocket costs.

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

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from California an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to defeat the previous question. I urge Members to do the right thing, to think strategically, and to think about the overall out-of-pocket costs.

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

Mr. Speaker, I was serving in the United States House of Representatives when the congressional Democrats passed the Affordable Care Act. I was serving in the House of Representatives when the implementation of ObamaCare happened at the end of calendar year 2013.

I have got to tell you something. The President told me I had a junk insurance plan. I was covered by a health savings account in those years. Then President Obama told me I had a junk insurance plan and that I was going to get something better.

I have got to tell you something. I didn't get something better. I went through healthcare.gov. I bought an unsubsidized ObamaCare policy, the bronze plan. I am like any other consumer. I bought on price.

What is the cheapest thing I could afford? That was the bronze plan. The premium was unbelievable. It was three times what I had paid for a premium before for my so-called junk insurance which I had had for years, which had covered every medical contingency that had occurred in my family's life for a number of years. But now I have to buy this policy that the premium was unbelievably high. But that wasn't the worst part, Mr. Speaker. The worst part was the deductible.

Now, look, I had a health savings account. I bought one as soon as the old medical savings accounts were allowed with the passage of the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill in, I think it was, July of 1996. The rules got written the next year. People were allowed to buy medical savings accounts. I bought one. I converted to a health savings account in 2004.

I thought I knew what a high deductible was. That was the whole purpose, after all, of having that medical savings account and, now, health savings account. You have a higher deductible so your premiums are going to be a little bit lower.

My premium certainly wasn't lower, but that deductible was something unlike anything I had ever seen. I went from a \$3,500 deductible in my old health savings account with what then-President Obama said was a junk insurance policy. I went from a \$3,500 premium to a \$6,800 premium for just an individual. This is not a family policy, just for an individual.

Now, let me tell you something, Mr. Speaker. Someone wakes up at 3 in the morning with a kidney stone, the worst pain they have ever had in their life. They go to the emergency room basically to get a shot of morphine and an appointment with a urologist the next day and hopefully pass the darn thing. That exercise can cost in excess of \$4,000. If you have a \$6,800 deductible, guess what. That is all on you. Your coverage is meaningless at that point. And at the same time, you are having to pay a very expensive premium for coverage that is not there when you need it.

I am not an expert on this, Mr. Speaker, but I would call that junk insurance. That is what then-President Obama and the Congressional Democrats brought us with the passage of the so-called Affordable Care Act. I would far rather go back to those days before.

Most people don't understand why it is they have less coverage now and it costs them more money. Yeah, they heard the argument, if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor; if you like your coverage, you can keep your coverage. They recognize that perhaps that was political hyperbole. But what they do not understand is: Why am I having to pay so much more now to get so much less?

Mr. Speaker, I submit that the ability for individuals to buy health savings accounts is not junk insurance. That is coverage that people can use. That is help for right now.

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

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, in the first 12 months of this administration, 3.2 million people have lost their healthcare because of the sabotage of this administration. As a matter of fact, last year, we had the highest increase in the number of uninsured since the ACA was passed.

When the ACA was passed, I was not in Congress. I was a State legislator in California, where we embraced the ACA, where we made it work for our families, and where we reached out to our constituents and asked: How can we make it better?

This is not the ceiling; this is the floor.

As State representatives, we felt that we had an urgency to act, to make it better and make it work for our constituents. That is what we did, and that is why the California exchange is so successful.

But that didn't happen in other States controlled by Republican legislators and Republican Governors. Unfortunately, they chose to do the opposite, and that has hurt their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the bill we are considering today will add another \$100 billion to our national debt. That is not a small thing.

When the bill comes due for this expenditure, how are we going to pay for it? What is the plan? Where is the budget? Where is the fiscal conservancy here?

Will the House GOP majority then go after the least fortunate Americans by cutting Medicaid? Or maybe they will go after American seniors and cut Medicare and Social Security.

These are the questions people will be asking themselves when they exercise their American civic duty this fall. Americans will have to decide: Are trillions in tax cuts for wealthy corporations worth it to me if it means that I can't go to the doctor?

That is why we have to offer real solutions, and we can start by paying for these bills today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose the previous question and the rule because we owe it to our future generations who will have to answer for our actions here today.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

First off, Mr. Speaker, let me reference an article from the *Investor's Business Daily* from April 10 of this year. I am quoting *Investor's Business Daily*:

"When the Congressional Budget Office released its updated budget forecast, everyone focused on the deficit number. But buried in the report was the Congressional Budget Office's tacit admission that it vastly overestimated the cost of the Trump tax cuts because it didn't account for the strong economic growth they would generate.

"Among the many details in the report, the one reporters focused on was the Congressional Budget Office's forecast that the Federal deficit would top \$1 trillion in 2020. . . ."

Most of the news accounts blame the tax cuts.

I am continuing to quote here:

"But there's more to the story that the media overlooked.

"First, the CBO revised its economic forecast sharply upward this year and next.

"Last June, the CBO said GDP growth for 2018 would be just 2 percent. Now it figures growth will be 3.3 percent"—this was last April, Mr. Speaker; I suspect it is probably going to be higher at the end of this quarter—"a significant upward revision. It also boosted its forecast for 2019 from a meager 1.5 percent to a respectable 2.4 percent."

□ 1345

Mr. Speaker, the tax cuts are working to boost economic growth. Obvi-

ously, the story is far from completed, but the revenue generated by that increased growth is more than enough to offset the tax cuts that were passed by this body last December.

Mr. Speaker, today's rule allows the House to take another step in fixing the problems created by the Affordable Care Act and returning control of healthcare spending back to patients, where it belongs.

H.R. 6199, the Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2018, will allow those Americans with health savings accounts to use those accounts to pay for over-the-counter medications, the practice which existed up until the Democrats took away that ability in the Affordable Care Act. This is the right thing to do.

I want to thank Representative JENKINS for her leadership on this legislation and the Members who contributed to the package that is before us today. I urge my colleagues to support today's rule and support the underlying bills.

The material previously referred to by Mrs. TORRES is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 1012 OFFERED BY
MS. TORRES

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

SEC. 7. 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. 6479) to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to include short-term limited duration plans in the definition of individual health insurance coverage. 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 and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. 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. 8. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 6479.

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), de-

scribes 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. BURGESS. 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.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the

previous question on House Resolution 1012 will be followed by 5-minutes votes on:

Adoption of House Resolution 1012, if ordered;

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 1011; and

Adoption of House Resolution 1011, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 224, nays 184, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 368]

YEAS—224

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

NAYS—184

Adams	Barragán	Beatty
Aguilar	Bass	Bera

Beyer	Gonzalez (TX)	Norcross
Bishop (GA)	Gottheimer	O'Halleran
Blumenauer	Green, Al	O'Rourke
Blunt Rochester	Green, Gene	Pallone
Bonamici	Grijalva	Panetta
Boyle, Brendan	Gutiérrez	Pascarella
F.	Hastings	Payne
Brady (PA)	Heck	Pelosi
Brown (MD)	Higgins (NY)	Perlmutter
Brownley (CA)	Himes	Peters
Bustos	Hoyer	Peterson
Butterfield	Huffman	Pingree
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Pocan
Carbajal	Jayapal	Polis
Cárdenas	Johnson (GA)	Quigley
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Raskin
Cartwright	Kaptur	Rice (NY)
Castor (FL)	Keating	Richmond
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Rosen
Chu, Judy	Kennedy	Roybal-Allard
Cicilline	Khanna	Ruiz
Clark (MA)	Kihuen	Ruppersberger
Clarke (NY)	Kildee	Rush
Clay	Kilmer	Ryan (OH)
Cleaver	Kind	Sánchez
Clyburn	Krishnamoorthi	Sarbanes
Cohen	Kuster (NH)	Schakowsky
Connolly	Lamb	Schiff
Cooper	Langevin	Schneider
Correa	Larsen (WA)	Schrader
Costa	Larson (CT)	Scott (VA)
Courtney	Lawrence	Scott, David
Crist	Lawson (FL)	Serrano
Crowley	Lee	Sewell (AL)
Cuellar	Levin	Shea-Porter
Cummings	Lewis (GA)	Sherman
Davis (CA)	Lieu, Ted	Sinema
Davis, Danny	Loebach	Sires
DeFazio	Lofgren	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Lowenthal	Soto
Delaney	Lowe	Suozzi
DeLauro	Lujan Grisham,	Swalwell (CA)
DelBene	M.	Takano
Demings	Luján, Ben Ray	Thompson (CA)
DeSaulnier	Lynch	Thompson (MS)
Deutch	Maloney,	Titus
Dingell	Carolyn B.	Tonko
Doggett	Maloney, Sean	Torres
Doyle, Michael	Matsui	Tsongas
F.	McCollum	Vargas
Engel	McEachin	Veasey
Espallat	McGovern	Vela
Esty (CT)	McNerney	Velázquez
Evans	Meeks	Visclosky
Foster	Meng	Wasserman
Frankel (FL)	Moulton	Schultz
Fudge	Murphy (FL)	Waters, Maxine
Gabbard	Nadler	Watson Coleman
Gallego	Napolitano	Welch
Garamendi	Neal	Wilson (FL)
Gomez	Nolan	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—20

Black	Jeffries	Price (NC)
Blackburn	King (IA)	Rokita
Ellison	Lipinski	Smith (MO)
Eshoo	Long	Speier
Graves (MO)	Messer	Walz
Hanabusa	Moore	Yoder
Hartzler	Noem	

□ 1412

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

Stated against:

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present during rollcall vote No. 368 on July 24, 2018. Had I been present, on rollcall vote No. 368, I would have voted "no."

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

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 179, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 369]

AYES—229

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

NOES—179

Adams	Butterfield	Cooper
Aguilar	Capuano	Correa
Barragán	Carbajal	Costa
Bass	Cárdenas	Courtney
Beatty	Carson (IN)	Crist
Bera	Cartwright	Crowley
Beyer	Castor (FL)	Cuellar
Bishop (GA)	Castro (TX)	Cummings
Blumenauer	Chu, Judy	Davis (CA)
Bonamici	Cicilline	Davis, Danny
Boyle, Brendan	Clark (MA)	DeFazio
F.	Clarke (NY)	DeGette
Brady (PA)	Cleaver	Delaney
Brown (MD)	Clyburn	DeLauro
Brownley (CA)	Cohen	Demings
Bustos	Connolly	DeSaulnier

Deutch	Larsen (WA)	Quigley
Dingell	Larson (CT)	Raskin
Doggett	Lawrence	Rice (NY)
Doyle, Michael	Lawson (FL)	Richmond
F.	Lee	Rosen
Engel	Levin	Roybal-Allard
Eshoo	Lewis (GA)	Ruiz
Espallat	Lieu, Ted	Rush
Esty (CT)	Loeb sack	Ryan (OH)
Evans	Lofgren	Sánchez
Foster	Lowenthal	Sarbanes
Frankel (FL)	Lowe y	Schakowsky
Fudge	Lujan Grisham,	Schiff
Gabbard	M.	Schrader
Gallego	Luján, Ben Ray	Scott (VA)
Garamendi	Lynch	Scott, David
Gomez	Maloney,	Serrano
Gonzalez (TX)	Carolyn B.	Sewell (AL)
Green, Al	Maloney, Sean	Shea-Porter
Green, Gene	Matsui	Sherman
Grijalva	McCollum	Sires
Gutiérrez	McEachin	Smith (WA)
Hastings	McGovern	Soto
Heck	McNerney	Swalwell (CA)
Higgins (NY)	Meeks	Takano
Himes	Meng	Thompson (CA)
Hoyer	Moulton	Thompson (MS)
Huffman	Nadler	Titus
Jackson Lee	Napolitano	Tonko
Jayapal	Neal	Torres
Jeffries	Nolan	Tsongas
Johnson (GA)	Norcross	Vargas
Johnson, E. B.	O'Halleran	Veasey
Kaptur	O'Rourke	Vela
Keating	Pallone	Velázquez
Kelly (IL)	Panetta	Visclosky
Kennedy	Pascrell	Wasserman
Khanna	Payne	Schultz
Kihuen	Pelosi	Waters, Maxine
Kildee	Perlmutter	Watson Coleman
Kilmer	Peters	Welch
Kind	Peterson	Wilson (FL)
Krishnamoorthi	Pingree	Yarmuth
Kuster (NH)	Pocan	
Langevin	Polis	

NOT VOTING—20

Black	King (IA)	Rokita
Blackburn	Lipinski	Ruppersberger
Diaz-Balart	Long	Smith (MO)
Ellison	Messer	Speier
Graves (MO)	Moore	Walz
Hanabusa	Noem	Yoder
Hartzler	Price (NC)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1420

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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF OFFICER JACOB J. CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE JOHN M. GIBSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in memory of Officer Jacob J. Chestnut and Detective John M. Gibson of the United States Capitol Police who were killed in the line of duty defending the Capitol on July 24, 1998.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 184, PROTECT MEDICAL INNOVATION ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6311, INCREASING ACCESS TO LOWER PREMIUM PLANS AND EXPANDING HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS ACT OF 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 1011) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 184) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6311) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan, 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.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 223, nays 188, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 370]

YEAS—223

Abraham	Cramer	Hensarling
Aderholt	Crawford	Herrera Beutler
Allen	Culberson	Hice, Jody B.
Amash	Curbelo (FL)	Higgins (LA)
Amodei	Curtis	Hill
Arrington	Davidson	Holding
Babin	Davis, Rodney	Hollingsworth
Bacon	Denham	Hudson
Banks (IN)	DeSantis	Huizenga
Barletta	DesJarlais	Hultgren
Barr	Diaz-Balart	Hunter
Barton	Donovan	Hurd
Bergman	Duffy	Issa
Biggs	Duncan (SC)	Jenkins (KS)
Bilirakis	Duncan (TN)	Jenkins (WV)
Bishop (MI)	Dunn	Johnson (LA)
Bishop (UT)	Emmer	Johnson (OH)
Blum	Estes (KS)	Johnson, Sam
Bost	Faso	Jordan
Brady (TX)	Ferguson	Joyce (OH)
Brat	Fitzpatrick	Katko
Brooks (AL)	Fleischmann	Kelly (MS)
Brooks (IN)	Flores	Kelly (PA)
Buchanan	Fortenberry	King (NY)
Buck	Fox	Kinzie
Bucshon	Frelinghuysen	Knight
Budd	Gaetz	Kustoff (TN)
Burgess	Gallagher	Labrador
Byrne	Garrett	LaHood
Calvert	Gianforte	LaMalfa
Carter (GA)	Gibbs	Lamborn
Carter (TX)	Gohmert	Lance
Chabot	Goodlatte	Latta
Cheney	Gosar	Lesko
Cloud	Gowdy	Lewis (MN)
Coffman	Granger	LoBiondo
Cole	Graves (GA)	Loudermilk
Collins (GA)	Graves (LA)	Love
Collins (NY)	Griffith	Lucas
Comer	Grothman	Luetkemeyer
Comstock	Guthrie	MacArthur
Conaway	Handel	Marchant
Cook	Harper	Marino
Costello (PA)	Harris	Marshall

Massie	Renacci	Stefanik
Mast	Rice (SC)	Stewart
McCarthy	Roby	Stivers
McCaul	Roe (TN)	Taylor
McClintock	Rogers (AL)	Tenney
McHenry	Rogers (KY)	Thompson (PA)
McKinley	Rohrabacher	Thornberry
McMorris	Rooney, Francis	Tipton
Rodgers	Rooney, Thomas	Trott
McSally	J.	Turner
Meadows	Ros-Lehtinen	Upton
Mitchell	Roskam	Valadao
Moolenaar	Ross	Wagner
Mooney (WV)	Rothfus	Walberg
Mullin	Rouzer	Walden
Newhouse	Royce (CA)	Walker
Norman	Russell	Walorski
Nunes	Rutherford	Walters, Mimi
Olson	Sanford	Weber (TX)
Palazzo	Scalise	Webster (FL)
Palmer	Schweikert	Wenstrup
Paulsen	Scott, Austin	Westerman
Pearce	Sensenbrenner	Williams
Perry	Sessions	Wilson (SC)
Pittenger	Shimkus	Wittman
Poe (TX)	Shuster	Womack
Poliquin	Simpson	Woodall
Posey	Smith (NE)	Yoho
Ratcliffe	Smith (NJ)	Young (AK)
Reed	Smith (TX)	Young (IA)
Reichert	Smucker	Zeldin

NAYS—188

Adams	Gallego	Neal
Aguilar	Garamendi	Nolan
Barragán	Gomez	Norcross
Bass	Gonzalez (TX)	O'Halleran
Beatty	Gottheimer	O'Rourke
Bera	Green, Al	Pallone
Beyer	Green, Gene	Panetta
Bishop (GA)	Grijalva	Pascrell
Blumenauer	Gutiérrez	Payne
Blunt Rochester	Hastings	Pelosi
Bonamici	Heck	Perlmutter
Boyle, Brendan	Higgins (NY)	Peters
F.	Himes	Peterson
Brady (PA)	Hoyer	Pingree
Brown (MD)	Huffman	Pocan
Brownley (CA)	Jackson Lee	Polis
Bustos	Jayapal	Quigley
Butterfield	Jeffries	Raskin
Capuano	Johnson (GA)	Rice (NY)
Carbajal	Johnson, E. B.	Richmond
Cárdenas	Jones	Rosen
Carson (IN)	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Cartwright	Keating	Ruiz
Castor (FL)	Kelly (IL)	Ruppersberger
Castro (TX)	Kennedy	Rush
Chu, Judy	Khanna	Ryan (OH)
Ciçilline	Kihuen	Sánchez
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Clay	Kind	Schiff
Cleaver	Krishnamoorthi	Schneider
Clyburn	Kuster (NH)	Schrader
Cohen	Lamb	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Langevin	Scott, David
Cooper	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Correa	Larson (CT)	Sewell (AL)
Costa	Lawrence	Shea-Porter
Courtney	Lawson (FL)	Sherman
Crist	Lee	Sinema
Crowley	Levin	Sires
Cuellar	Lewis (GA)	Smith (WA)
Cummings	Lieu, Ted	Soto
Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Suozzi
Davis, Danny	Loeb sack	Swalwell (CA)
DeFazio	Lofgren	Takano
DeGette	Lowenthal	Thompson (CA)
Delaney	Lowey	Thompson (MS)
DeLauro	Lujan Grisham,	Titus
DelBene	M.	Tonko
Demings	Luján, Ben Ray	Torres
DeSaulnier	Lynch	Tsongas
Deutch	Maloney,	Vargas
Dingell	Carolyn B.	Veasey
Doggett	Maloney, Sean	Vela
Doyle, Michael	Matsui	Velázquez
F.	McCollum	Visclosky
Engel	McEachin	Wasserman
Eshoo	McGovern	Schultz
Espallat	McNerney	Waters, Maxine
Esty (CT)	Meeks	Watson Coleman
Evans	Meng	Welch
Foster	Moulton	Wilson (FL)
Frankel (FL)	Murphy (FL)	Yarmuth
Fudge	Nadler	
Gabbard	Napolitano	

NOT VOTING—17

Black	King (IA)	Rokita
Blackburn	Long	Smith (MO)
Ellison	Messer	Speier
Graves (MO)	Moore	Walz
Hanabusa	Noem	Yoder
Hartzler	Price (NC)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1429

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 225, noes 184, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 371]

AYES—225

Abraham	Duncan (TN)	Labrador
Aderholt	Dunn	LaHood
Allen	Emmer	LaMalfa
Amash	Estes (KS)	Lamb
Amodei	Faso	Lamborn
Arrington	Ferguson	Lance
Babin	Fitzpatrick	Latta
Bacon	Fleischmann	Lesko
Banks (IN)	Flores	Lewis (MN)
Barletta	Fortenberry	LoBiondo
Barr	Fox	Loudermilk
Barton	Frelinghuysen	Love
Bergman	Gaetz	Lucas
Biggs	Gallagher	Luetkemeyer
Bilirakis	Garrett	MacArthur
Bishop (MI)	Gianforte	Marchant
Bishop (UT)	Gibbs	Marino
Blum	Gohmert	Marshall
Bost	Goodlatte	Massie
Brady (TX)	Gosar	Mast
Brat	Gowdy	McCarthy
Brooks (AL)	Granger	McCaul
Brooks (IN)	Graves (GA)	McClintock
Buchanan	Graves (LA)	McHenry
Buck	Griffith	McKinley
Bucshon	Grothman	McMorris
Budd	Guthrie	Rodgers
Burgess	Handel	McSally
Byrne	Harper	Meadows
Calvert	Harris	Mitchell
Carter (GA)	Hensarling	Moolenaar
Carter (TX)	Herrera Beutler	Mooney (WV)
Chabot	Hice, Jody B.	Mullin
Cheney	Higgins (LA)	Newhouse
Cloud	Hill	Norman
Coffman	Holding	Nunes
Cole	Hollingsworth	Olson
Collins (GA)	Hudson	Palazzo
Collins (NY)	Huizenga	Palmer
Comer	Hultgren	Paulsen
Comstock	Hunter	Pearce
Conaway	Hurd	Perry
Cook	Issa	Pittenger
Costello (PA)	Jenkins (KS)	Poe (TX)
Cramer	Jenkins (WV)	Poliquin
Crawford	Johnson (LA)	Posey
Culberson	Johnson (OH)	Reed
Curbeo (FL)	Johnson, Sam	Reichert
Curtis	Jones	Renacci
Davidson	Jordan	Rice (SC)
Davis, Rodney	Joyce (OH)	Roby
Denham	Katko	Roe (TN)
DeSantis	Kelly (MS)	Rogers (AL)
DesJarlais	Kelly (PA)	Rogers (KY)
Diaz-Balart	King (NY)	Rohrabacher
Donovan	Kinzinger	Rooney, Francis
Duffy	Knight	Rooney, Thomas
Duncan (SC)	Kustoff (TN)	J.

Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema

Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg

Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

□ 1436

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on July 24, 2018, due to delayed travel on account of inclement weather. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: "Yes" on rollcall No. 368, "Yes" on rollcall No. 369, "Yes" on rollcall No. 370, and "Yes" on rollcall No. 371.

NOES—184

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Engel
Eshoo
Españillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)

NOT VOTING—19

Black
Blackburn
Ellison
Graves (MO)
Hanabusa
Hartzler
King (IA)

Levin
Long
Messer
Moore
Noem
Price (NC)
Ratcliffe

Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Lipinski
Loebuck
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 589. An act to establish Department of Energy policy for science and energy research and development programs, and reform National Laboratory management and technology transfer programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2353. An act to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2503. An act to establish Department of Energy policy for science and energy research and development programs, and reform National Laboratory management and technology transfer programs, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CARE AND HEALTH ACT

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1201) to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1201

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 "Equitable Access to Care and Health Act" or the "EACH Act".

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION FROM HEALTH COVERAGE RESPONSIBILITY REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5000A(d)(2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(A) RELIGIOUS CONSCIENCE EXEMPTIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Such term shall not include any individual for any month if such individual has in effect an exemption under section 1311(d)(4)(H) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act which certifies that—

“(I) such individual is a member of a recognized religious sect or division thereof which is described in section 1402(g)(1), and is adherent of established tenets or teachings of such sect or division as described in such section; or

“(II) such individual is a member of a religious sect or division thereof which is not described in section 1402(g)(1), who relies solely on a religious method of healing, and for whom the acceptance of medical health services would be inconsistent with the religious beliefs of the individual.

“(ii) SPECIAL RULES.—

“(I) MEDICAL HEALTH SERVICES DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘medical health services’ does not include routine dental, vision and hearing services, midwifery services, vaccinations, necessary medical services provided to children, services required by law or by a third party, and such other services as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may provide in implementing section 1311(d)(4)(H) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

“(II) ATTESTATION REQUIRED.—Clause (i)(II) shall apply to an individual for months in a taxable year only if the information provided by the individual under section 1411(b)(5)(A) of such Act includes an attestation that the individual has not received medical health services during the preceding taxable year.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018.

(c) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the amendment made by subsection (a) shall preempt any State law requiring the provision of medical treatment for children, especially those who are seriously ill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSKAM. 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 material on H.R. 1201, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to see this bipartisan bill is getting a vote today.

H.R. 1201, the EACH Act, or Equitable Access to Care and Health Act, introduced by my colleague, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS from Illinois, provides commonsense relief from ObamaCare's mandate to purchase insurance from those who object on religious grounds.

This bill extends the religious conscience exemption from ObamaCare's

individual mandate to those individuals who rely solely on a religious method of healing. Receiving medical health services, as we traditionally think of them, is inconsistent with the religious belief of Christian Scientists.

This bill says that for people who choose not to use traditional healthcare or services, they are fully exempted from the Affordable Care Act's requirement to buy insurance. For Christian Scientists, if they bought the insurance plan, they wouldn't use it anyway. If you don't believe in something, why should the government force you to participate.

In healthcare, so many of our choices have been restricted because of the Affordable Care Act's domino effect across the entire healthcare sector. The EACH Act takes a step in the right direction by restoring freedom for people who had to face a dire decision of either violating their conscience by purchasing ObamaCare or violating the law. This is an unfair position that the law should not put them in, and I hope we can finally resolve this by passing the EACH Act today.

We must come together to help those who have been hurt by this intrusion into their lives. This bill has widespread bipartisan support. In fact, the House passed a similar bill last Congress by voice vote. Once more, passing the EACH Act will reduce the deficit by \$31 million.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the House has passed this bill before, making clarifications on the existing religious exemptions for healthcare. I understand that religious groups have important healthcare concerns that must be taken seriously.

I support this bill. But we should be talking about issues in healthcare that our constituents are bringing up to us every day, like skyrocketing prescription drug costs, increasing premium costs, and threats to guaranteed coverage for preexisting conditions, a direct result of efforts by my Republican colleagues.

The Trump administration continues to raise costs and reduce access to affordable healthcare in its never-ending effort to sabotage the Affordable Care Act.

In just the last few weeks, the administration has refused to defend protections for Americans with preexisting conditions, stopped risk adjustment payments to health plans covering sicker patients, and again slashed payments to the navigators that help people access healthcare insurance. These and many other misguided efforts are raising the costs for those Americans who need healthcare coverage the most.

We should be examining and responding to this growing threat to affordable care, not ignoring it.

I encourage my Republican colleagues to bring to the floor bills that truly address the healthcare cost crisis that middle class Americans and seniors are facing. After all, that was their promise to our constituents.

In 2015, the President promised:

We're going to terminate ObamaCare. We're going to terminate it, it's going to be terminated. It's going to be replaced with something much better and something much less expensive for you and for the country.

Republicans and the President have failed to present the public with a better plan, and they have failed to drive down the cost to patients.

As a matter of fact, their work has driven costs up. The cumulative ACA sabotage by the Republican Congress and the administration are adding as much as 24 percent of healthcare premium increases in my home State of California.

Now they should work with us to strengthen and protect existing programs so that our constituents can go to the doctor when they need to or get surgery or a drug that their lives depend on. As Members of Congress, this is our responsibility.

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, the good news for my friend from California is that tomorrow he will have an opportunity to vote on bills that will lower the costs of healthcare with the health savings account agenda that is forthcoming.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), a longstanding advocate on behalf of Christian Scientists, who has tried to bring rescue to them.

□ 1445

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) for yielding me time, and I thank another gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) for introducing this legislation.

The Equitable Access to Care and Health Act is a bill that I strongly support. It expands the religious conscience exemption in the Affordable Care Act.

The bipartisan legislation has broad support in the House and in the Senate. It has passed the House by voice vote in the last two Congresses.

The ACA currently provides for a religious conscience exemption, but the exemption is unduly narrow and applies only to a few faiths. This exemption should be expanded to accommodate other religions whose sincerely-held religious beliefs could cause them not to purchase healthcare insurance.

With the recent repeal of the individual mandate, the CBO now estimates that the bill will result in about \$30 million in cost savings. I hope my colleagues will support this piece of legislation. It will help advance the cause of religious freedom.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to mention that my friend and committee member was half right in what he said about tomorrow's vote. We will be voting on some healthcare bills tomorrow, and they are bills that will help. But they will help people that either have the money to pay for healthcare or people who are healthy, not the folks who need access to quality, affordable healthcare.

I would be remiss if I didn't point out that, contrary to this party's position for decades, these bills aren't paid for, and they are going to add about \$70 billion worth of costs to our national debt.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ROSKAM for his leadership on this issue. I also want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), because this bill that we are talking about today is and has been rife with nothing but bipartisan support. It is issues like this that we can work together to correct. No matter what the bill is, no matter what some of the other outlying issues of implementation of certain laws that may or may not affect our constituents and how they do so, but the fact that we are trying to fix this once and for all, for many in this country, is a testament to what good happens here in a bipartisan fashion.

I also want to thank the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, KEVIN BRADY, my good friend, for his continued leadership on this issue and helping to make sure this bill comes back to the floor.

This Congress has an opportunity to continue the bipartisanship I just talked about and promote religious liberty and fairness by passing the EACH Act, because the EACH Act modestly expands the religious conscience exemptions under the Affordable Care Act to include individuals who rely solely on religious methods of healing.

The current religious conscience exemption under the Affordable Care Act exclusively applies to only a few select faiths. As a result, some Americans, including Christian Scientists, are required to purchase medical health insurance that does not cover the healthcare of their religious practice and choice. They are, therefore, forced with the choice of violating their conscience by purchasing traditional health insurance or violating the law by not complying with any individual mandate.

Under the EACH Act, applicants must attest annually that they are a member of a religious group, that they rely solely on a religious method of healing, and that they have not received medical health services during the preceding taxable year.

This is a very important point, Mr. Speaker. Additionally, with the help of input from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the bill makes it clear that

the legislation does not preempt any State laws requiring the provision of medical treatment for children. Further, if a parent needs to provide a necessary medical service to a child, doing so would not invalidate the individual's exemption.

The EACH Act, again, is truly an example of bipartisan legislation with input from stakeholders that actually made it better. I am proud to have worked with my friend and colleague, Mr. KEATING, on moving this legislation forward. He knows this issue well. His home State of Massachusetts established a similar religious conscience exemption in State law more than 10 years ago.

I also represent Principia College, a college for Christian Scientists in Elmhurst, Illinois, one that we have a few graduates of right here in Congress, including the last speaker, Mr. LAMAR SMITH. While working on this bill, I have heard from both students and professors from Principia on the importance of passing this legislation and what it would mean to their lives.

One such student wrote: "I feel religious liberty is such a vital part of the American exceptionalism that permeates worldly thought, and the passing of this bill will only contribute to the commitment of our government to preserve that right. My family has paid excessive amounts for healthcare, among other expenses, that we do not use due to our reliance on the Christian Science healing for prayer. I do not believe Christian Scientists should feel that they are being punished in some way for expressing their First Amendment right."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand up here today for their First Amendment right.

This legislation is about as straightforward as it gets. It is broadly bipartisan, promotes religious liberty and fairness, and it also saves the taxpayers money. The Congressional Budget Office estimated passing the EACH Act would save taxpayers an additional \$31 million, if signed into law.

The EACH Act passed this House in both the 113th and 114th Congresses, but, unfortunately, it was held up in the Senate. It is time that Congress finally passes the EACH Act out of both Chambers and sends it to the President's desk for his signature.

I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. Does the gentleman from Illinois have further speakers?

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I yield myself the balance of my time, and I thank the sponsors for their work on this bill. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

We hold conscience in this House tenderly. Our Founders were wise. In the

First Amendment to the Bill of Rights, the first freedom that they articulated was our freedom to worship. What you are hearing today is a bipartisan consensus that we value that, and we recognize the power of conscience, the power of religious liberty, the power of being able to worship as one pleases. That is something that Mr. DAVIS from Illinois is advocating today, Mr. THOMPSON is supporting as well, along with the longstanding work of Mr. SMITH from Texas.

Passing this bill will give those who object to health insurance on religious grounds the ability to opt out of the system that they don't want to participate in, in its entirety. They won't have to face a choice between violating their belief and violating the law anymore. I urge its passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1201, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIVE AMERICAN HEALTH SAVINGS IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1476) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit individuals eligible for Indian Health Service assistance to qualify for health savings accounts, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1476

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 "Native American Health Savings Improvement Act".

SEC. 2. INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE ASSISTANCE NOT DISQUALIFIED FROM HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(D) SPECIAL RULE FOR INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE PROGRAMS.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii), an individual shall not be treated as covered under a health plan described in such subparagraph merely because the individual receives hospital care or medical services under a medical care program of the Indian Health Service or of a tribal organization."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1476, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to stand before you today as we consider H.R. 1476, the Native American Health Savings Improvement Act, a bipartisan bill introduced by Mr. MOOLENAAR of Michigan, that makes commonsense improvements to current rules surrounding health savings accounts and those who get care through the Indian Health Service.

Generally, anyone covered solely by a high-deductible health plan that meets certain requirements is allowed to make tax-free contributions to a health savings account. But for certain individuals who receive care through the Indian Health Service, this isn't the case.

Under IRS guidance, an individual who has received medical services at an Indian Health Service facility at any time during the previous 3 months is ineligible to make contributions to an HSA. This practice could discourage those who rely on care delivered at an Indian Health Service facility from participating in an HSA. This should be fixed so that these enrollees can avail themselves to the benefits of Health Savings Accounts.

High-deductible health plans and health savings accounts are critical components of consumer-driven healthcare. Together, they empower individuals and families to shop around. They unleash the power of choice and competition that are so badly needed in healthcare to lower costs and improve quality today. These are the elements we need to encourage in the system, if we are going to start bending the cost curve in the right direction, and if we want to lower barriers to these types of accounts and encourage individuals who are otherwise eligible not to forgo treatment at an Indian Health Service facility simply because of confusion over when they might be able to resume contributing to their HSA.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the House has passed this bill before. It allows individuals eligible for Indian Health Service, or IHS, to participate in a health savings account if they are enrolled in a high-deductible health plan.

I support this bill. We should be talking about issues in healthcare that strengthen our healthcare system for all Americans while addressing the issues in the Indian Health Service program, and there should be no exception to that today.

Given the important role IHS plays providing primary care to our Native American population, we should be working to ensure that all participants in IHS have access to high-quality care. Reports of underfunding and resulting substandard care need to be addressed, so we make sure that all individuals that this healthcare program serves benefit from the congressional action that we take, not just those who happen to have the money to put in an HSA, to pay for an HSA.

We shouldn't overlook the important role Medicare and Medicaid play in providing healthcare to these populations. Thousands of IHS beneficiaries are also enrolled in Medicare, Medicaid, or some combination of both.

Republicans are looking to dramatically cut and undermine these critical programs. Offering IHS enrollees a savings account won't make up for damage inflicted by the cuts to Medicaid or Medicare.

Instead, we should strengthen both of these programs and coordinate care with IHS to make sure individuals are getting the best care possible.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MOOLENAAR).

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank Chairman BRADY of the House Committee on Ways and Means for his leadership of the committee, and also Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. THOMPSON for their support here on the floor today.

I also want to thank Congressman RAUL RUIZ for cosponsoring this legislation and making it bipartisan.

This legislation before us today, H.R. 1476, will improve access to health savings accounts for Native Americans who choose to receive care at Indian Health Service facilities by ending an unnecessary penalty against them.

Mr. Speaker, if you or I were to use a health savings account, we would be able to immediately make a contribution to it the day after you receive care at a doctor's office. There is no prohibition on making those contributions.

However, right now, Native Americans across the country, including my constituents, cannot do the same thing if they receive treatment from a doctor at the Indian Health Service. Instead, they are prohibited from immediately saving the money they earned and must wait for 3 months before they can make another contribution into the personal account they use to provide for their health and that of their family.

This makes no sense. Instead, this commonsense legislation eliminates the problem. If this bill becomes law, Native Americans will no longer have

to wait 3 months. They will be able to receive treatment from Indian Health Service doctors near them and save money in their HSAs whenever they want.

This is a bipartisan, patient-centered solution to a government-created problem.

□ 1500

It will benefit the Saginaw Chippewas in my district as well as Tribes throughout Michigan and across the country. It will help those who work hard to save money and take care of their families.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their support of this legislation.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsors of this bill, and I want to give a particular shout-out to Congressman RAUL RUIZ, also Dr. RUIZ when he is not in Congress, for his cosponsorship of this bill and all the hard work that he has put into this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to cast an "aye" vote for this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, about 22 million Americans are covered by high-deductible health plans with an HSA. These are options that are increasingly popular across the spectrum because they lower premiums and they are a vehicle to save for other healthcare expenses.

I think this is a good bill. It has been well articulated this afternoon, particularly by the bill's sponsor and by Mr. THOMPSON, and I urge its passage.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1476, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WATER AND AGRICULTURE TAX REFORM ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 519) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 519

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 "Water and Agriculture Tax Reform Act of 2018".

SEC. 2. FACILITATE WATER LEASING AND WATER TRANSFERS TO PROMOTE CONSERVATION AND EFFICIENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (12) of section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(J) TREATMENT OF MUTUAL DITCH IRRIGATION COMPANIES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a mutual ditch or irrigation company or of a like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company, subparagraph (A) shall be applied without taking into account—

“(I) any income received or accrued from the sale, lease, or exchange of fee or other interests in real and personal property, including interests in water (other than income derived from the sale, lease, or transfer of water to nonmembers outside the river basin or basins within which the mutual ditch or irrigation company operates),

“(II) any income received or accrued from the sale or exchange of stock in a mutual ditch or irrigation company (or in a like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company) or contract rights for the delivery or use of water, or

“(III) any income received or accrued from the investment of income described in subclause (I) or (II),

except that any income described in subclause (I), (II), or (III) which is distributed or expended for expenses (other than for operations, maintenance, and capital improvements) of the mutual ditch or irrigation company or of the like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company (as the case may be) shall be treated as nonmember income in the year in which it is distributed or expended. For purposes of the preceding sentence, expenses (other than for operations, maintenance, and capital improvements) include expenses for the construction of conveyances designed to deliver water outside of the system of the mutual ditch or irrigation company or of the like organization.

“(ii) TREATMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE.—In the case of a mutual ditch or irrigation company or of a like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company, where State law provides that such a company or organization may be organized in a manner that permits voting on a basis which is pro rata to share ownership on corporate governance matters, subparagraph (A) shall be applied without taking into account whether its member shareholders have one vote on corporate governance matters per share held in the corporation. Nothing in this clause shall be construed to create any inference about the requirements of this subsection for companies or organizations not included in this clause.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 519, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), and I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 519, which would provide tax-exempt mutual irrigation companies with more flexibility in respect to funding their operations, maintenance, and improvement of their water infrastructure, especially in drought-stricken areas.

Tax-exempt mutual ditch or irrigation companies are important to rural communities and to agriculture. These companies allow farmers, ranchers, and others, including water users and even some urban water users, to collaborate and pool resources to install and maintain vital infrastructure for the delivery of water.

To maintain their tax-exempt status, however, mutual ditch or irrigation companies must satisfy Tax Code requirements that the bulk of their income, which is used to fund operations and capital improvements, must be from the shareholders of these irrigation and water delivery districts.

H.R. 519 allows these companies to receive other sources of income and still maintain their tax-exempt status. The bill provides that, for the income from other sources to receive this preferential tax treatment, it generally must be used for operations and maintenance to ensure that these funds will be reinvested in irrigation infrastructure systems.

This bill would provide mutual irrigation companies with more flexibility with respect to funding their operations and maintaining improvements to their water infrastructure, especially in the drought-stricken areas, and it will facilitate more efficient water allocation in support of these rural economies.

This bill also clarifies that governance matters in regard to these mutual ditch or irrigation companies may be arranged as permitted under the State laws.

This bill supports local economies, promotes more efficient use of water, helps farmers and ranchers in many arid areas, and actually is just much fairer in how these resources are maintained and the ability to maintain these districts under the understanding of the current Tax Code.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us will allow certain entities to retain their tax exemption so long as they are generally reinvesting that revenue in oper-

ations and maintenance, including capital projects.

As a farmer from California, I know well how critical water infrastructure improvements are to small irrigation districts. This change will help irrigation districts continue to invest in drought-resilient projects instead of relying on rate increases.

In States like mine, both drought-stricken and reliant on irrigation districts for water deliveries, infrastructure investment is a critical tool to help us prepare for future droughts. But we must also ensure that Federal policy changes do not create unintended consequences for water users.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Representative BUCK and Chairman BRADY for working with me to include guardrails in this bill that will eliminate financial incentives to transfer water among regions in a way that disadvantages agricultural enterprise, impairs water quality, or causes environmental harm. This protection against potential for abuse resulting from the policy changes in H.R. 519 should prevent undue harm to my northern California constituents.

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, just sort of a quick commentary.

I want to thank the gentleman from California for his input, his observations. He has been incredibly constructive and paid a lot of attention to protecting his constituents. Those of us from arid areas, we care a lot about this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) for giving me this opportunity to speak on behalf of H.R. 519, the Water and Agriculture Tax Reform Act of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. THOMPSON for his work on this and making sure that this is, in fact, a bipartisan effort and a much better bill than it started out as.

I also want to thank Chairman BRADY in the Ways and Means Committee for working with me to bring this bill to the floor. I introduced this bill last year, and Chairman BRADY has been a good partner in assisting with its passage from the committee.

Mr. Speaker, farmers, ranchers, and families, businesses, sportsmen, everyone in my district relies on water for their livelihood, but in the arid prairies of the Great Plains, water is running short. Under the blistering Colorado Sun, poorly watered crops quickly become less productive and may die altogether.

Farmers around my district tell me they are moving operations elsewhere because they don't have access to water or they simply can't afford it. Agricultural communities around the Nation will face economic crisis if farmers and ranchers cannot afford water.

H.R. 519 is a key step towards solving this problem. It offers farmers and ranchers an affordable water supply; and in doing so, it supports not only our agricultural communities, but everyone in America who relies on farms and ranches for food.

My bill seeks to help farmers by empowering them to support each other. Many farmers rely on nonprofit, member-owned cooperatives to supply their water. These mutual irrigation and ditch companies give farmers ownership in their water supply. However, current IRS regulations prohibit these nonprofits from generating more than 15 percent of their revenue from nonmember sources. If they exceed this 15 percent threshold, they lose their tax-exempt status.

H.R. 519 responds by removing caps on how much revenue these water companies can raise from nonmember sources, allowing them, for example, to sell water access for recreational use or raise funds through crossing fees. The only requirement is that this revenue must be reinvested in maintenance, operations, and infrastructure improvements, keeping water prices affordable for the members and upholding the nonprofit ideals of the cooperative. With this financial freedom, mutual irrigation and ditch companies can continue to play a vital role in supporting our Nation's farmers.

The bill also reforms the IRS treatment of member voting eligibility for cooperatives, protecting mutual associations that have complied with State law for years. By empowering nonprofit mutual irrigation ditch companies to raise revenue from nonmember sources, H.R. 519 will reduce the cost of water for cash-strapped farmers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to help our rural communities and, frankly, all of America by passing the Water and Agriculture Tax Reform Act.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsors of this bill, in particular Congressman BUCK for his good work working with me to ensure that we were able to take care of some concerns that we had in the original drafting of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for this piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for a very quick closing.

In a previous life, I was the treasurer of Maricopa County. We had 3,300 taxing districts in this county. A substantial number of those taxing districts were actually just these, irrigation and water delivery. Many of them were in the rural parts of my county, but a lot of them, you would be surprised, were actually in the suburban and even some in downtown Phoenix.

I have actually had a conversation with a couple of them, one asking if they had an excess water allocation that year, could they actually sell it to the local pond, the little conservation reserve in our riverbed, and those things; and if they did so, if that amount of money exceeded 15 percent of their revenues, would they blow up their tax status.

In this case, this legislation would prevent that, but they still have to use that money to constantly improve their infrastructure, therefore, I believe, being more water economical.

So this is a good thing for our communities, particularly rural, particularly the uniqueness of those of us in the desert Southwest.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 519, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN THE IRS WORKFORCE ACT OF 2018

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3500) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service from rehiring any employee of the Internal Revenue Service who was involuntarily separated from service for misconduct, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3500

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 "Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act of 2018".

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON REHIRING ANY EMPLOYEE OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE WHO WAS INVOLUNTARILY SEPARATED FROM SERVICE FOR MISCONDUCT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7804 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d) PROHIBITION ON REHIRING EMPLOYEES INVOLUNTARILY SEPARATED.—The Commissioner may not hire any individual previously employed by the Commissioner who was removed for misconduct under this subchapter or chapter 43 or chapter 75 of title 5, United States Code, or whose employment was terminated under section 1203 of the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998 (26 U.S.C. 7804 note)."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to the hiring of employees after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall

be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3500, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we are taking up H.R. 3500, the bipartisan Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act. This bill seeks to provide additional safeguards within the IRS by prohibiting the agency from rehiring any individual previously employed by the IRS but removed for misconduct or terminated for cause.

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Before we talk more about this bill, I would like to take a moment just to thank the bill's sponsor, Representative KRISTI NOEM from South Dakota, for her tireless work on this bill.

Last Congress, a version of this bill passed the House of Representatives with overwhelming, bipartisan support. This Congress, we made some small changes to the bill to address some of my colleagues' concerns and we hope that they will continue to support the bill in its new form. We are also encouraged to see its presence in the bipartisan Taxpayer First Act, introduced by chairman and ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee just last week.

As we all know, IRS employees have access to Americans' most sensitive information, such as our Social Security numbers, home addresses, and how much we are paid. Given the magnitude of the sensitive information that the IRS holds, hiring employees of high integrity is essential to maintaining public trust in tax administration and safeguarding taxpayer information.

In 2017, work by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, or TIGTA, raised serious concerns about the IRS's continued practice of rehiring former employees with conduct and performance issues. The inspector general concluded that the IRS does not have effective hiring policies to fully consider past employee conduct and performance issues prior to making a tentative decision to rehire them.

I should note that this is the second such report that the inspector general has published. In 2014, the inspector general first alerted Congress to this

issue, finding that the IRS was rehiring former employees with significant conduct or performance issues.

So what types of conduct are we talking about here? We are talking about IRS employees who threatened their coworkers, didn't pay their own taxes, were excessively absent, falsified employment forms, or were so deficient in their jobs that the IRS had no choice but to terminate their employment. There were also instances where employees accessed sensitive taxpayer information without authorization to do so. I think we can all agree that those are not the types of people that the IRS should be seeking to rehire.

While Congress has repeatedly sought to signal to the IRS its concern on this issue through legislation such as the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, and the IRS Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, the IRS continues to struggle.

TIGTA's most recent findings suggest that further congressional action is needed. As a result, we have before us today a bill which will seek to guarantee that this practice does not continue. It also ensures greater integrity within the IRS's workforce, something that I think all Members of Congress can easily support.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, today's debate reminds me of the words of Will Rogers who used to say that: "The only difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets."

Although I concede that he had a point during most of the past year, hopefully, today will be an exception to the Rogers rule. That is because we are taking up H.R. 3500, a good bill that would prevent the IRS from rehiring employees who have previously been terminated due to poor conduct or performance.

I want to say at the outset that I know most, if not overwhelmingly all, IRS employees tend to be ethical and diligent public servants who have, in recent years, been asked to do much more with much less. That is exactly what the American people deserve and expect from them and we all appreciate those efforts.

The IRS employees collecting our Nation's revenue enable the Federal Government to support veterans benefits, pave roads, protect the environment, fund medical research, care for needy children, and meet all of the other needs our Federal Government asks. This is an enormous task, and we need intelligent men and women of integrity in those roles who will administer our Tax Code in a fair, even-handed, reasonable, and ethical manner. Most IRS employees meet this standard with the utmost attention to their professional responsibilities and we honor their contributions to the country.

When we learn of situations that fall short of those high standards or employees who have conducted themselves dishonorably, though, it is critically important to rectify the situation swiftly. Jobs at the IRS are positions of great public trust, and last year the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration alerted us to a practice of hiring individuals who had previously violated that trust.

During 15 months covering parts of 2015 and 2016, TIGTA found that the IRS hired almost 7,500 people, including 2,000 rehires. About 10 percent of the rehired employees, who were mostly seasonal workers, had been terminated or separated while under investigation for substantiated conduct or performance issues. Four of the more than 200 rehired employees failed to file their own tax returns. Four were under investigation for unauthorized access to taxpayer information. Twenty-seven failed to disclose a prior termination or conviction on their applications, as required.

Although these hires represent but a fraction of IRS employees overall, it is important that we rectify the situation swiftly and prevent this from happening in the future.

So I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3500, and at the same time remind them that the outliers we are addressing today should not diminish our respect for the men and women at the IRS who serve the public with, I think, dignity every single day.

Mr. Speaker, let me thank those Internal Revenue Service employees for their hard work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge our colleagues on both sides to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, I would like to point out that this legislation has enjoyed wide bipartisan support in the past, and for good reason. It is a commonsense bill that will help build trust with the IRS and integrity within our tax system.

I want to, again, thank my colleague from South Dakota, Representative KRISTI NOEM, for being a leader on this issue and for sponsoring this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3500, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3500, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMPROVING SOCIAL SECURITY'S SERVICE TO VICTIMS OF IDENTITY THEFT ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and

pass the bill (H.R. 6084) to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to provide for a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration for individuals who are victims of identity theft, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6084

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 "Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act".

SEC. 2. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT FOR IDENTITY THEFT VICTIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 901 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SECTION 714. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT FOR IDENTITY THEFT VICTIMS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of Social Security shall establish and implement procedures to ensure that any individual whose social security account number has been misused (such as to fraudulently obtain benefits under title II, VIII, or XVI of this Act, in a manner that affects an individual's records at the Social Security Administration, or in a manner that prompts the individual to request a new social security account number) has a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration throughout the resolution of the individual's case. The single point of contact shall track the individual's case to completion and coordinate with other units to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

"(b) SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (a), the single point of contact shall consist of a team or subset of specially trained employees who—

"(A) have the ability to coordinate with other units to resolve the issues involved in the individual's case, and

"(B) shall be accountable for the case until its resolution.

"(2) TEAM OR SUBSET.—The employees included within the team or subset described in paragraph (1) may change as required to meet the needs of the Social Security Administration, provided that procedures have been established to—

"(A) ensure continuity of records and case history, and

"(B) notify the individual when appropriate."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 6084, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today and pleased that we are considering this bipartisan legislation that I introduced with a friend of mine from Connecticut, Ranking Member LARSON, H.R. 6084, the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act.

This is an issue that is important to all of us in all of our districts. As you well know, Mr. Speaker, identity theft is a crime that is growing at very alarming rates around the country. Supporting victims of identity theft is something I have long championed. As a former local prosecutor and advocate for victims, I gained a real understanding of the plight of many Americans and what they face in recovering from identity theft and from other forms of exploitation.

In response, I spent a large part of my legislative career working on victim's rights and ensuring justice. I am pleased that we are considering H.R. 6084 today.

Mr. Speaker, Americans who are victims of identity theft often face an uphill battle when they contact the Social Security Administration for help. All too often, these individuals find themselves being bounced around in phone trees from recording to recording, person to person, only to start all over again with each new person with whom they speak.

In many cases, an individual will speak to multiple people at the Social Security Administration by phone, only then to be told that they need to go to a field office to resolve the situation.

Mr. Speaker, I just think that is wrong. These are victims of identity theft who urgently need assistance from the Social Security Administration so that they can get their lives back on track. But too many of these victims are being revictimized by the Social Security Administration's cumbersome and disorganized system. It is high time that the Social Security Administration improves its customer service to victims of identity theft.

That is why I introduced H.R. 6084, the bipartisan legislation which will require the Social Security Administration to provide a single point of contact at the agency to an individual who needs to resolve a problem with the Social Security Administration because of the misuse of his or her Social Security number.

This important bill will help Americans get the assistance they need from the Social Security Administration by implementing a customer-focused process. I am pleased to have the support of AARP, the National Council of Social Security Management Associations, and the Association of Mature American Citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD statements of support for my bill from those groups.

AARP,

Washington, DC, June 21, 2018.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND RANKING MEMBER NEAL: On behalf of AARP's 38 million members, we are writing in support of the H.R. 6084, the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act of 2018. The bill directs the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide a single point of contact and a team of SSA staff to help redress any problems faced by Social Security ID theft victims. AARP is strongly committed to protecting consumers from identity theft and supports your efforts to improve the assistance offered to individuals whose Social Security number has been compromised.

An individual's Social Security number is critical financial information and integral to everyone's personal identity. The range of fraud that can be committed when an individual's Social Security number has been compromised is truly staggering, and the time and effort required to reassert one's financial identity can be daunting. Streamlining and simplifying the assistance that the SSA offers an identity theft victim will be welcomed by individuals who are caught in an often overwhelming situation.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to promote the integrity of the Social Security program, and to protect the identities of American workers and their families.

Sincerely,

JOYCE A. ROGERS,
Senior Vice President,
Government Affairs.

AMAC,
June 18, 2018.

Hon. MIKE BISHOP,
8th Congressional District, Michigan, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN BISHOP: On behalf of the 1.3 million members of AMAC, the Association of Mature American Citizens, I am writing in support of H.R. 6084, the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act. This important piece of legislation will make it easier for seniors to track the status of their identity theft claims at the Social Security Administration (SSA). By establishing a single point of contact for an identity theft case, H.R. 6084 is a smart, senior-focused solution to a growing problem.

Every year, millions of Americans, and particularly seniors, fall victim to identity theft. While being victimized is bad enough, the process of restoring financial security and recovering peace of mind can be a long, arduous, and convoluted process. For seniors, these problems are particularly acute as they primarily work with SSA—one of the nation's largest federal bureaucracies—to restore their financial security.

H.R. 6084 seeks to improve customer service to identity theft victims in a way that is both smart and practical. Under this proposal, when an identity theft victim requests a new Social Security number, they will be assigned a single point of contact at SSA to manage their case until it is resolved. For seniors, this will prove invaluable as they will no longer have to navigate SSA's massive federal structure to resolve their identity theft case. Seniors can have a singular, reliable, and approachable case manager who can answer their questions, monitor the status of their claim, and help seniors in need of assistance.

As an organization committed to representing mature Americans and seniors, AMAC is dedicated to ensuring senior citizens' interests are protected. We applaud Congressman Bishop for his practical and timely solution to help identity theft victims in their most vulnerable time. AMAC is pleased to offer our organization's full support to the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act.

Sincerely,

DAN WEBER,
President and Founder of AMAC.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS, INC.,

Arlington, VA, July 16, 2018.

Hon. MIKE BISHOP,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM JOHNSON,
Chairman, House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Social Security, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN B. LARSON,
Ranking Member, House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Social Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN BISHOP, CHAIRMAN JOHNSON AND RANKING MEMBER LARSON: On behalf of the National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA) and our members throughout the nation, I would like to thank you for your introduction and original cosponsorship of H.R. 6084, the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act. We very much appreciate your leadership on this important legislation to ensure a measure that will not only benefit and protect the American public, but also ease the administrative burden on the hardworking employees of the Social Security Administration (SSA) by establishing a single point of contact for an identity theft case. H.R. 6084 is a commonsense solution to a growing problem.

NCSSMA is pleased to support H.R. 6084 as it reinforces NCSSMA's own efforts and initiatives to provide the best service to the American people, through the effective and efficient administration of SSA's programs. Millions of Americans fall victim to identity theft every year. We believe this legislation will help identity theft victims work with a single point of contact at SSA to assist in resolving their identity theft case.

As an organization that is committed to improving management and program administration in SSA while advocating for an agency that remains customer focused with an emphasis on excellent public service, we commend you for your practical and timely solution to help identity theft victims. NCSSMA is pleased to offer our organization's support to the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act.

Thank you again for your leadership. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if we can provide additional assistance.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER DETZLER,
NCSSMA President.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6084, which will provide needed assistance to victims of identity theft. The Committee on Ways and Means has been engaged for some time on the issue of identity theft. In particular, we are stewards of the Social Security

number which is a target for identity thieves because it is the key to unlocking a stolen identity.

Identity theft is a growing problem and online hacking has led to major security breaches in both government, and extensively in the private sector. Americans of all ages, even children, are vulnerable to having their identity stolen. This can wreak havoc in people's lives.

One thing we can do, which we are doing today, is to make sure that individuals can get the assistance they need from the Social Security Administration, SSA, when identity theft has caused problems with their benefits, or if their number has been severely compromised.

For example, fraudsters have been able to steal a Social Security number and use it to file a fraudulent benefit application or to file a false tax return and claim a refund. For some individuals, the theft of their identity creates such damage that they are forced to request a new Social Security number.

Right now, identity theft victims trying to resolve an issue related to the misuse of their Social Security numbers may have to contact SSA multiple times, speaking to several different people, before the issue can be fully resolved.

This legislation provides individuals with a single point of contact in the Social Security Administration that will be responsible for resolving all Social Security-related issues in connection with a theft. This unit will be accountable to identity theft victims until completion, and will track the individual's case and coordinate with other units to resolve all of these issues as quickly as possible.

I certainly support this legislation, which was reported out of the Ways and Means Committee by a unanimous vote. I urge support for H.R. 6084, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON), one of the great leaders of this body.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friends, Representative BISHOP, and Ranking Member LARSON, for their work on this commonsense bill.

I have heard firsthand how hard it can be for victims of identity theft to work with the Social Security Administration.

□ 1530

Recently, a man told me about his experience of someone trying to claim his benefit. First, he got a letter from Social Security telling him to call them about his claim. He hadn't made a claim, so he called Social Security at the number they gave him, and he never heard back. Later, when he tried to file a claim of his own, he ended up having to make four separate calls. Then, Social Security told him they couldn't help him over the phone. Because of the fraudulent claim, they

said he had to go to a field office. As a result of all this hassling, he decided to just put off filing his claim.

If this bill had been in place, he would have had someone in Social Security to help him. Instead, he got the runaround. Having a single point of contact at Social Security for victims of identity theft just makes sense.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the sponsors for their hard work, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as today's debate on this legislation has shown, victims of identity theft in this country are facing an uphill battle in getting assistance from the Social Security Administration. Simply put, the current disconnected structure at the Social Security Administration isn't working for the American people. In response, my bill would require the Social Security Administration to assign a single point of contact at the agency to those who need to solve a problem with the Social Security Administration because of the misuse of his or her Social Security number.

This simply put but important reform will bring an added level of comfort to victims of identity theft and will ensure that they are receiving the quality care that they deserve.

In closing, I thank Ranking Member LARSON for assisting in this bill and joining me in offering the bill. I also thank Chairman BRADY, Ranking Member NEAL, and my fellow Ways and Means members for their support.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in supporting this important bipartisan legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6084, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMPROVING SENIORS ACCESS TO QUALITY BENEFITS ACT

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4952) to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study and submit a report on the effects of the inclusion of quality increases in the determination of blended benchmark amounts

under part C of the Medicare program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4952

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 "Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act".

SEC. 2. DETERMINATION OF BLENDED BENCHMARK AMOUNT STUDY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the inclusion of quality increases in the determination of blended benchmark amounts under section 1853(n)(4) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-23(n)(4)) undermines the goal of delivering high-quality care under the Medicare program under title XVIII of such Act.

(b) STUDY AND REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall conduct a study and submit to Congress a report on the effects of the inclusion of quality percentage increases under section 1853(n)(5) of such Act in the determination of blended benchmark amounts under section 1853(n)(4) of such Act. Such study and report shall include an analysis of the following:

(1) The authority of the Secretary to remove such increases from the determination of such amounts.

(2) The effects of including such increases in the determination of such amounts on Medicare Advantage organizations (including the effects on any contracts entered into by such organizations).

(3) The financial impact of including such increases in the determination of such amounts by county.

(4) The effects of including such increases in the determination of such amounts on individuals enrolled in a plan under part C of title XVIII of such Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4952, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, H.R. 4952, the Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act, will allow us to take a deeper look at how the Medicare Advantage benchmark cap is affecting people across the Nation. I have been working with Mr. KIND and other Members to address this inequity that affects seniors in high-quality plans across the country.

The Medicare Advantage program was designed to give seniors a choice in their healthcare and utilize the private

sector to provide better care and benefits. Medicare Advantage plans receive a capitated payment rate to cover the patient's total cost of care. In order to encourage quality, seniors enrolled in high-quality plans receive a quality bonus payment that goes directly to seniors in the form of reduced cost sharing or extra benefits.

The Medicare Advantage program is very popular and has been working well for many years. In my district in western Pennsylvania, more than half of Medicare beneficiaries choose Medicare Advantage. Nationwide, Medicare Advantage enrollment has grown to 30 percent of Medicare beneficiaries. That number is even higher with 48 percent of the Hispanic and 38 percent of African American Medicare beneficiaries choosing Medicare Advantage.

Unfortunately, the Affordable Care Act implemented a cap on payments to Medicare Advantage plans. This misguided benchmark cap policy has penalized approximately 5.8 million American seniors being denied important benefits like care coordination, vision, dental, and wellness programs.

This issue has cost seniors in my district and across the country millions of dollars in benefits that they are entitled to. We talk often about paying for value in the Medicare program, and this policy undermines that goal.

The benchmark cap is clearly a problem, and we need more information on it. The Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act requires the Secretary of HHS to analyze and report to Congress on the impact of including quality bonus payments in the Medicare Advantage benchmark cap. It also establishes a sense of Congress that this issue undermines the goal of delivering high-quality care in the Medicare program.

It is my understanding that the Department of Health and Human Services has limited secretarial authority to make this change on its own. I hope to work together with the Secretary on policies such as this to encourage high-quality plans for seniors.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation has broad support from many stakeholders, including America's Health Insurance Plans, the Better Medicare Alliance, the Healthcare Leadership Council, Meals on Wheels America, the National Minority Quality Forum, the Alliance of Community Health Plans, and many others.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 13, 2018.

Hon. GREG WALDEN,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WALDEN: I write to you regarding H.R. 4952, the "Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act" the Committee on Ways and Means ordered favorably reported that was also referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

I ask that the Committee on Energy and Commerce waive formal consideration of the

bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving formal consideration of the bill, the Committee on Energy and Commerce is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in those provisions of the bills that fall within your Rule X jurisdiction. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees on any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include a copy of our letters in the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON ENERGY AND COM-
MERCE,

Washington, DC, July 16, 2018.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: Thank you for your letters regarding H.R. 4952, the "Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act," H.R. 6138, the "Ambulatory Surgical Center (ACS) Payment Transparency Act of 2018," and H.R. 6311, the "To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan."

The Committee on Energy and Commerce will forgo consideration of both bills so that they may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

I appreciate your assurance that by forgoing action on these bills, the Committee is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in the bills. I also appreciate your offer of support for the appointment of conferees from the Committee to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

Sincerely,

GREG WALDEN,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4952, the Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act.

More than 19 million Medicare beneficiaries were enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans in 2017—that is almost one-third of all Medicare beneficiaries—and that number is growing every year. This bill would require the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct a study and submit a report to Congress on the effect of including quality bonus payments in the benchmark cap.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or CMS, believes the benchmark payments made to Medicare Advantage plans include the bonuses Medicare Advantage plans may earn from delivering care that meets certain basic quality standards. On the other hand, plans argue that these quality bonuses should not be included in the benchmark cap. The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission has recommended, among other things, that this interaction be investigated.

This bill, by requiring a study of the issue, will help Congress come to a conclusion on possible solutions.

In closing, I thank the sponsors for their hard work. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support H.R. 4952, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that the ACA's benchmark cap negatively impacts more than 40 percent of counties across our country. The Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act will require the Secretary to fully evaluate the impact of including quality bonus payments under the benchmark cap on our seniors residing in these counties.

This bill was brought through the committee process in a bipartisan fashion. Now on the floor, I strongly recommend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of H.R. 4952 to ensure seniors are not missing out on additional healthcare benefits or reduced cost sharing as a result of the ACA's benchmark cap.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4952, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMBULATORY SURGICAL CENTER PAYMENT TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2018

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6138) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for ambulatory surgical center representation during the review of hospital outpatient payment rates under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6138

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 "Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Transparency Act of 2018" or the "ASC Payment Transparency Act of 2018".

SEC. 2. ADVISORY PANEL ON HOSPITAL OUTPATIENT PAYMENT REPRESENTATION.

(a) ASC REPRESENTATIVE.—The second sentence of section 1833(t)(9)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(t)(9)(A)) is amended by inserting "and at least one ambulatory surgical center representative" after "an appropriate selection of representatives of providers".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to advisory panels consulted on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. REASONS FOR EXCLUDING ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES FROM ASC APPROVED LIST.

Section 1833(i)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(i)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “In updating such lists for application in years beginning with the second year beginning after the date of the enactment of this sentence, for each procedure that was not proposed to be included in such lists in the proposed rule with respect to such lists and that was subsequently requested to be included in such lists during the public comment period with respect to such proposed rule and that is not included in the final rule updating such lists, the Secretary shall cite in such final rule the specific criteria in paragraph (b) or (c) of section 416.166 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), based on which the procedure was excluded. If paragraph (b) of such section is cited for exclusion of a procedure, the Secretary shall identify the peer reviewed research, if any, or the evidence upon which such determination is based.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 6138, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, ambulatory surgery centers provide patients with high-quality, same-day surgical and preventive care. H.R. 6138, the Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Transparency Act of 2018, makes two simple and straightforward ASC reforms.

The bill adds an ASC representative to the advisory panel on hospital outpatient payment, which will allow ASCs proper representation and a seat at the table for future CMS payment policy changes. This bill also requires the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to disclose their criteria for inclusion or exclusion of procedures on the ASC approved list.

Currently, CMS does not fully provide explanations for their decisions, leading to a lack of transparency in the process. These simple changes will continue to protect patient access to cost-effective and high-quality services performed in the ASC setting.

I hope that this legislation marks the first of many steps in further bolstering ASC and patient access to these high-quality facilities.

I thank Chairman BRADY, Ranking Member NEAL, and the Ways and Means

staff for working to provide transparency in this space. I also thank Mr. LARSON for his work and partnership on this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 13, 2018.

Hon. GREG WALDEN,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WALDEN: I write to you regarding H.R. 6138, the “Ambulatory Surgical Center (ACS) Payment Transparency Act of 2018” the Committee on Ways and Means ordered favorably reported which was also referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

I ask that the Committee on Energy and Commerce waive formal consideration of the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving formal consideration of the bill, the Committee on Energy and Commerce is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in those provisions of the bills that fall within your Rule X jurisdiction. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees on any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include a copy of our letters in the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2018.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: Thank you for your letters regarding H.R. 4952, the “Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act,” H.R. 6138, the “Ambulatory Surgical Center (ACS) Payment Transparency Act of 2018,” and H.R. 6311, the “To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify the definition of qualified health plan for purposes of the health insurance premium tax credit and to allow individuals purchasing health insurance in the individual market to purchase a lower premium copper plan.”

The Committee on Energy and Commerce will forgo consideration of both bills so that they may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

I appreciate your assurance that by forgoing action on these bills, the Committee is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in the bills. I also appreciate your offer of support for the appointment of conferees from the Committee to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

Sincerely,

GREG WALDEN,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, the House has passed this bill before, making clarifications on existing religious exemptions for healthcare. I understand that religious groups have important healthcare concerns that should be taken seriously.

While I support this bill, we should be talking about issues in healthcare

that our constituents bring up every day: skyrocketing prescription drug costs, increasing premiums, and threats to guaranteed coverage.

I just wanted to make those points, never losing the opportunity.

This bill is pretty simple, Mr. Speaker. Right now the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or CMS, has an advisory panel for hospital outpatient issues that is comprised of outside experts. The problem is this panel does not include representation for an ambulatory surgical center, or ASC, in its membership, despite the panel counseling on Medicare or ASC payment issues.

This legislation would require the addition of someone from ASC on the advisory panel on hospital outpatient concerns.

Given that Medicare pays ASCs more than \$4 billion a year through the outpatient payment rule, it just makes sense that ASCs be represented on this panel.

The bill requires more transparency in determining what types of surgeries are safe to perform on an outpatient basis. More than 3 million Medicare beneficiaries receive care at an ASC for cataract surgery and other surgeries. This bill makes sure that Medicare hears the voice of the ASC provider, so that millions of Medicare beneficiaries can continue to receive the outpatient care they want.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of H.R. 6138, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1545

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

I want to reiterate the small but important step we are taking here today in passing this legislation. Ambulatory surgical centers provide excellent care at lower cost to patients and taxpayers.

While there is a much longer conversation that needs to happen regarding parity in reimbursement in outpatient settings, what we are doing here is simple. ASCs are an integral part of the healthcare system, and we are saying that, as stakeholders, they deserve a seat at the table when changes to payment policies are being debated and when decisions are being made by CMS on the services they are able to provide patients. We believe they should get a transparent explanation as to why those decisions were made.

Mr. Speaker, this is a commonsense bill. I urge all my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6138, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TRIBAL SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT OF 2018

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6124) to amend title II of the Social Security Act to authorize voluntary agreements for coverage of Indian tribal council members, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6124

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 “Tribal Social Security Fairness Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS FOR COVERAGE OF SERVICES BY AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 218 the following new section:

“VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS FOR COVERAGE OF INDIAN TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

“Purpose of Agreement

“SEC. 218A. (a)(1) The Commissioner of Social Security shall, at the request of any Indian tribe, enter into an agreement with such Indian tribe for the purpose of extending the insurance system established by this title to services performed by individuals as members of such Indian tribe’s tribal council. Any agreement with an Indian tribe under this section applies to all members of the tribal council, and shall include all services performed by individuals in their capacity as council members.

“(2) Notwithstanding section 210(a), for the purposes of this title, the term ‘employment’ includes any service included under an agreement entered into under this section.

“Definitions

“(b) For the purposes of this section:

“(1) The term ‘member’ means, with respect to a tribal council, an individual appointed or elected to serve as a member or the head of the tribal council.

“(2) The term ‘tribal council’ means the appointed or elected governing body of a federally recognized Indian tribe.

“Effective Date of Agreement

“(c)(1) Any agreement under this section shall be effective with respect to services performed after an effective date specified in such agreement, provided that such date may not be earlier than the first day of the next calendar month after the month in which the agreement is executed by both parties.

“(2) At the request of the Indian tribe at the time of the agreement, such agreement may apply with respect to services performed before such effective date for which there were timely paid in good faith (and not subsequently refunded) to the Secretary of the Treasury amounts equivalent to the sum of the taxes which would have been imposed by sections 3101 and 3111 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 had such services constituted employment for purposes of chapter 21 of such Code. No agreement under this section may require payment to be made after the effective date specified in such agreement of any taxes with respect to services performed before such effective date.

“Duration of Agreement

“(d) No agreement under this section may be terminated on or after the effective date of the agreement.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.—Section 210(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 410(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (20), by striking “or” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (21), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (21) the following new paragraph:

“(22) Service performed by members of Indian tribal councils as tribal council members in the employ of an Indian tribal government, except that this paragraph shall not apply in the case of service included under an agreement under section 218A.”.

(2) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) in section 3121(b)—

(i) in paragraph (20), by striking “or” at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (21), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(iii) by inserting after paragraph (21) the following new paragraph:

“(22) service performed by members of Indian tribal councils as tribal council members in the employ of an Indian tribal government, except that this paragraph shall not apply in the case of service included under an agreement under section 218A of the Social Security Act.”; and

(B) in section 3121(d)(4), by inserting “or 218A” after “section 218”.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to affect application of any Federal income tax withholding requirements under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 6124, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today in support of my bill, the Tribal Social Security Fairness Act. This bipartisan bill supports our community’s Tribal leaders and their fair access to the Social Security system and the benefits they have earned by ensuring Tribal governments have the same opportunity to participate in the Social Security Program that so many others across the country rely on. It was unanimously approved by the Ways and Means Committee in late June.

This bill provides a simple solution to a problem facing Tribal leaders across the country, including in my home State of Washington. In Washington State, many Tribal leaders have been paying into the Social Security system with the expectation of future benefits. However, a Social Security Administration policy ruling issued in 2006 prevented them from continuing to

pay into the program and have their earnings count toward future benefits.

This problem was brought to my attention a few years ago when I met with Virginia Cross. Virginia Cross is the chairwoman of the Muckleshoot Tribal Council in Washington State. After this meeting, we discovered other Tribal leaders in Washington and across the country face the same challenges, including the Snoqualmie Tribe in Washington. Hearing these examples, it just didn’t seem fair that those who wanted to pay into the system could not pay into the system. That is when my staff and I went to work to find a solution.

Thanks to the dedicated advocacy of the Muckleshoot and the Snoqualmie Tribes and the leadership of fellow Washingtonians, Representatives DELBENE and KILMER, as well as Representatives COLE and SCHWEIKERT, we were able to find a bipartisan, comprehensive solution to the problem. I would also like to thank Chairman BRADY and Ranking Member NEAL of the Ways and Means Committee and their staff for all the hard work they have put in on this most important bill.

I urge my colleagues to join me today in righting this wrong so our Tribal leaders can receive the Social Security benefits they deserve.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6124, which closes a longstanding gap in Social Security coverage for members of Indian Tribal councils.

Let me thank Representatives DAVE REICHERT and SUZAN DELBENE for their good work to resolve this issue.

H.R. 6124 allows Indian Tribal councils to voluntarily cover their members under Social Security in a way that is similar to how State and local governments do so today. This would allow individuals employed as members of Tribal councils to contribute to Social Security and Medicare and, therefore, earn benefit protection.

I want to emphasize that the decision to participate would be voluntary. Each Tribal council will have the right to decide for itself.

In addition, because there has been confusion around this issue for many years, the legislation allows Tribal council members to receive benefit credit if they have erroneously paid Social Security taxes in the past, even though they were not required to. This is only fair, and I am pleased that the legislation addresses this problem as well.

Social Security and Medicare coverage are valuable protections for all Americans. I am pleased that this bipartisan legislation is moving forward, and I urge its support.

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the

gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON).

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. REICHERT, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. COLE, and Mr. KILMER for introducing this commonsense bill.

As chairman of the Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee, I held a hearing last year on Social Security coverage for some State and local governments. During the hearing, we discussed how State and local governments were initially excluded from Social Security. But over time, the law was changed to provide State and local governments the choice to extend Social Security coverage to their employees.

However, Tribal councils don't have this same option. The IRS and Social Security have a rule that Tribal council members are not eligible for Social Security coverage. That isn't right. Tribal councils should be able to participate in Social Security if they want to. The bill on the floor today fixes this by giving Tribal councils the choice.

I also want to be clear that this bill does not mandate Social Security coverage. Tribes will still have the ability to make their own decision.

This bill treats Tribal council members fairly when it comes to Social Security benefits and is the result of a request from several Tribal councils. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill. It is a bipartisan bill.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I will do this really quickly.

Being from Arizona, where I have, functionally, 23 Tribes, 21 or 22 reservations, it is surprising how often this becomes a subject and trying to understand how big and complex many of our Tribal communities are. We think our lives are sometimes complex. Imagine having to operate in the world of multiple layers, where you have to deal with State and local, Federal, and then Tribal politics, issues, and those things.

I was visiting some of my friends on a Tribal community called Ak-Chin. It was interesting. One of the gentleman there basically said: I am on council. I can't participate in Social Security. But before I was on council, I managed one of the Tribal operations, and there I could participate in Social Security.

I know this is sort of a glitch, but this is one of those honorable things where we step up and we create some optionality. Within that optionality, I think we respect Tribal sovereignty, and we are just doing the right thing here.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I want to thank the sponsors for their hard work. I urge colleagues on

both sides of the aisle to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 6124, the Tribal Social Security Fairness Act, is a straightforward, commonsense, bipartisan bill. It ensures our Tribal leaders have access to Social Security benefits that they so deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6124, the Tribal Social Security Fairness Act.

I am pleased to support this common sense, bipartisan bill that will extend a basic right to tribal leaders across the country: the ability to retire with dignity and security.

Astonishing as it may seem, elected tribal leaders, including those who have already paid into Social Security, can no longer contribute to—or access the benefits of—this critical safety net program.

After a lifetime of service to their communities, tribal leaders shouldn't have to struggle to make ends meet.

They deserve the same access to Social Security as every other American.

This speaks to a broader problem, Mr. Speaker.

As the first inhabitants of our homeland, the interests of Native Americans should be a primary consideration when federal policy makers go to work—not an afterthought.

But, too often, the unique considerations of Indian Country are just that . . . an afterthought.

Nevertheless, every decision we make in this body—from the Farm Bill to healthcare to tax policy—every decision we make impacts our Native American brothers and sisters.

Earlier today, in the Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, we heard from the tribe whose members helped the Pilgrims survive that first winter in Plymouth. Their good will is part of the reason you and I are here today.

Moving forward, it's incumbent upon us to demonstrate the same generosity of spirit that was shown to our nation's founders.

And we can start here and now.

I urge my colleagues to support this common sense legislation today, and to fully consider the implications of new policies on Indian Country in the future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6124, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECT MEDICAL INNOVATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1011, I call up the bill (H.R. 184) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the

excise tax on medical devices, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1011, the amendment printed in House Report 115-860 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

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

H.R. 184

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 "Protect Medical Innovation Act of 2018".

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF MEDICAL DEVICE EXCISE TAX.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking subchapter E.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Subsection (a) of section 4221 of such Code is amended by striking the last sentence.

(2) Paragraph (2) of section 6416(b) of such Code is amended by striking the last sentence.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of subchapters for chapter 32 of such Code is amended by striking the item relating to subchapter E.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to sales after December 31, 2019.

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 Ways and Means.

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill H.R. 184, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, today, the House will vote on H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act, which will finally repeal the medical device excise tax and eliminate a burden on patients and the companies that create and produce life-saving medical devices for people all over the world.

The medical device industry is truly an American success story, directly employing more than 400,000 people. In Minnesota alone, more than 35,000 people are employed at almost 700 companies, mostly small companies that you have never heard of. Many of them were started by a doctor or an engineer or an entrepreneur in the garage or in the backyard with an idea to improve or help save someone's life. In fact, 80

percent of all medical device companies have less than 50 employees, and 93 percent have less than 500 employees. The jobs they provide are good, rewarding jobs that pay above-average salaries.

Mr. Speaker, America is a net exporter in medical devices, one of the other reasons why it is an American success story. But back in 2013, the Affordable Care Act imposed a new 2.3 percent excise tax on all medical devices.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, 2.3 percent may not sound like much, but it wasn't a tax on profits; it was a tax on sales, on revenue. Usually the government puts an excise tax on things we want to discourage, like tobacco, alcohol, or gas-guzzling automobiles.

Why would we want to discourage medical innovation? Only in Washington would you impose a tax on lifesaving medical devices and then think you are going to help reduce healthcare costs.

Guess what? The device tax caused the loss of over 29,000 jobs. Now, with strong bipartisan support, we have been able to eliminate this onerous tax with suspensions. The last time we suspended this tax, companies responded by hiring more engineers and more technicians and putting more money into research and development projects for these new, lifesaving technologies.

But these innovators need certainty. They need predictability. And a permanent repeal is needed to especially help startup companies from where the next generation of inventions and innovation will come.

Investors will hold back capital in new companies when there is a threat of an excise tax starting back up because it already takes 8 to 10 years, Mr. Speaker, for these companies to become profitable in the first place. This tax raises the bar and makes it even more difficult for them to become profitable.

I have had many conversations with companies that I represent in my community about what this excise tax means to them. I remember having a conversation with a medium-sized company owner who said that without this tax they would be able to have a few more projects online, which meant they would hire two more engineers and two more technicians. Other companies to which I have spoken said they would be able to directly invest more in research and development, creating more high-paying jobs, invent better products. Ultimately, it is about helping more patients.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, is there is strong recognition that we need to eliminate this tax on a bipartisan basis, because it is such bad policy. In fact, very few bills have such strong bipartisan support: 277 cosponsors. Mr. Speaker, 44 of those cosponsors are Democrats across the aisle.

I pledge that I will continue working with Senator KLOBUCHAR in the Senate

across the aisle, and my colleagues, to get this over the finish line, because there are very few issues that would unite an ELIZABETH WARREN and a TED CRUZ, but this, Mr. Speaker, is one of them.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this week has been dubbed "health week" on the House floor. However, based on the legislation we are considering, it is hard to take that challenge seriously. The bills before us today simply don't do very much. Instead, we should be considering measures that go to the heart of what Americans need: lower healthcare costs and high-quality care. That includes lower drug costs and prescription benefits that should be extended to all members of the American family based on the following notion that we should continue to make sure that pre-existing conditions remain part of the Affordable Care Act.

More and more families are facing difficult healthcare decisions. All too often, it comes down to not going to an important doctor appointment or cutting pills in half or stopping the taking of prescription medicines altogether. This, coupled with other challenges Americans face at home, like retirement security, addiction issues, and education costs, will make it harder, not easier, for them to move forward.

At home in western Massachusetts, I hear about how people need to make complicated decisions for their families. Congress can simplify these things by bringing bills to the floor that truly address the cost of healthcare without making consumers shoulder more of the cost and give tax benefits to the wealthy, leaving patients to ever growing medical bills.

Unfortunately, I have not seen any efforts to address these growing costs in a meaningful way. Instead, our Republican colleagues continue to lead efforts to sabotage critical health programs. This has led to more uncertainty for American families. This uncertainty also impacts the marketplace and leads to premium increases and adds to the burden for American families already having trouble making ends meet.

Instead of placing more anxiety on individuals facing discrimination for preexisting conditions, we should protect and strengthen already existing programs like Medicare and Medicaid.

The legislation before us is another billion, billion, billions of dollars in unpaid tax cuts. This is on top of the \$2.3 trillion this Congress has already passed into law, all with borrowed money. Republicans are using the deficit, which they keep making larger, to justify the deep cuts they plan to make to Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid. These bills will only intensify Republican calls for further cuts to those critical programs.

American families need certainty, Mr. Speaker. What is happening to our Nation's healthcare at the moment is anything but. It is another obstacle for families to get a leg up and ensure their children and grandchildren are safe and have opportunities well into the future.

The same is true for our seniors and those working to prepare for retirement. They should be in a place knowing they can retire without anxiety and have health programs they can count on in their later years.

The bills before us this day do nothing to solve problems for everyday Americans. Instead, it leaves them further behind, with increased healthcare costs, lower coverage, and certainly sacrifices the quality of care they might receive.

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BANKS), someone who represents a State that is steeped in medical technology jobs and has been a leader in championing the repeal of this tax.

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota, who has been the foremost leader in the House of Representatives for a very long time to permanently repeal the medical device tax.

Mr. Speaker, there are more than 7,000 medical device companies in the United States that contribute hundreds of billions of dollars to our economy every year. These companies employ over 400,000 Americans, while creating lifesaving technologies that benefit patients around the world.

Many of these manufacturers are located, as my colleague said, in my home district of northeast Indiana. In fact, Warsaw, Indiana, in my district, is known as the orthopedic capital of the world.

There is no doubt that this tax was incredibly destructive while it was in effect. Data from the U.S. Department of Commerce indicates that 29,000 jobs were lost in the industry between 2012 and 2015. Suspension of the tax has reduced some of the damage, but long-term investments and planning are impossible without full repeal.

Without permanent repeal, we will never be able to fully recover the jobs destroyed by ObamaCare, and patients will continue to be denied new, lifesaving products.

The Protect Medical Innovation Act will ensure that the medical device industry does not just survive but thrives, and this commonsense and bipartisan legislation would permanently repeal the medical device tax and, thereby, remove a mindless roadblock to economic growth and patient health.

I want to thank my friend again, Representative PAULSEN, for his tireless efforts on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 184.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New

Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), who is a well-known champion of Americans' healthcare plans.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I know the great intentions of the sponsor of this legislation. That is not in question. What is in question is that we have very, very short memories when it comes to healthcare.

We made a commitment when we put the Affordable Care Act together. We knew it wasn't perfect, and obviously since then we have tried to make some changes, but we haven't had much cooperation from the other side.

It wasn't mindless. In fact, the medical device industry agreed to the conclusion. In sitting down in negotiations we started out with one thought in mind, regardless of what we were talking about: we shall pay for what we vote on, unlike some other legislation that will go nameless right now.

We devised the Affordable Care Act so that it could be paid for and we would not have to add to the deficit. In fact, one of these taxes, in order to pay for the Affordable Care Act, we are discussing right now, the medical device tax. It started out at 5 percent. In working with the industry, we came to a conclusion of 2.3 percent.

So we went from \$40 billion raised for the Affordable Care Act to \$20 billion, see, because we knew we had to pay for this. That is what healthcare is all about, and that is why you guys on the other side—you people have not come up with an alternative, because you don't know how to pay for anything. So we paid for this.

The Protect Medical Innovation Act. Well, when the Affordable Care Act was being crafted, the medical device industry—and by the way, the medical device industry is probably the most scrutinized industry in the United States. Most of those companies, the 7,000 in the United States—most of them—are good actors, but a lot of them were not.

Ten years ago I stood on this floor, Mr. Speaker, and pointed out all the cases against the medical device companies who were bribing doctors in order for those doctors to recommend the device. That is a fact of life. I didn't make that up. That is not a political injection here. This is what happened.

You could shove it off all you want. If I have to come back to the floor on another occasion and cite chapter and verse the court cases, you won't be so happy. That is not my purpose today.

What I am saying is, they agreed to the deal. They knew that the increase in health coverage of millions more Americans would directly increase the demand for medical devices.

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

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. By the way, Mr. Ranking Member, many medical devices are sold to people old, like myself, who are on Medicare. You con-

tinue to cut Medicare, and you will be cutting off your nose to spite your face.

Congress most recently passed a delay of the medical device tax as part of the continuing resolution. This extended the time that they wouldn't have to pay a dime to the health system through the end of next year, costing taxpayers \$4 billion. Nothing to sneeze at.

Additionally, this year, the industry has stood to benefit tremendously from the reduction in the corporate tax rate, down to 21 percent. You didn't get that break, and I didn't get that break.

There is nothing that will lead me to believe these benefits will trickle down to help patients afford the devices they need to survive or lower the price of those devices in the first place, regardless of who is paying for them, out of what plan.

I'll go back to the point. We put the ACA together so that it would be paid for. That is why we had to come up with that money, and we did, so you couldn't repeal it. And what you are trying to do is choke it to death. You are trying to bleed it.

What you are doing is forcing more and more people—you just went from 20 million down to 17 million because of the subsidies that you wouldn't put through that were in the law, because of the mandate that was originally in the law.

And what is the alternative? Silence. Health issues are the biggest issue this year, Mr. Speaker. I am glad I am on the right side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, contrary to some of the claims we heard a little bit before about the bill doing nothing to help everyday, average Americans, I will just remind Members that this bill reverses a harmful tax that is hurting job growth and innovation across the country.

Access to good-paying jobs and innovative medical products is critically important, and I would argue that that is really important for everyday Americans.

I would agree, also, with what was said earlier. Americans need certainty. This is an industry that needs certainty if we are going to be able to invest in new innovations, new inventions, to keep patients at the forefront of lifesaving and life-improving technology, to make sure their healthcare is the model of the rest of the world.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE), who has been a strong voice for innovation, not only in her State but within our conference here in the House of Representatives, in repealing the device tax.

Mrs. LOVE. Mr. Speaker, this is about the medical technology industry and a manufacturing success story, one of the last expanding manufacturing enterprises in the United States. While

the U.S. is the current worldwide leader in medical technology innovation, that leadership is being threatened.

I am speaking to you today about the medical device tax. This industry has a huge presence in Utah, and this unfair tax would have a negative effect on my district and the country as a whole.

□ 1615

In Utah, this industry has created more than 10,300 jobs and contributes over \$5 billion to the State's economy.

Recently, Congress has been focused on reducing taxes to make the United States a more attractive place to do business, but the medical technology industry would get a significant tax increase. Even with the recent tax changes, industry gains would be neutralized by this tax.

Under the 2.3 percent excise tax, medical device manufacturers would be required to pay the IRS an estimated average of \$194 million per month in medical device tax payments. In Utah, BD's total impact of the device tax is about \$90 million on an annualized basis. For Edwards Lifesciences, this would be a \$30 million expense.

In a competitive global economy, this tax threatens the industry that directly employs 400,000 Americans, generates \$25 billion in payroll, and invests nearly \$10 billion in research and development annually.

American companies represent 38 percent of the global market, and the suspended tax looms over our Nation's ability to innovate and to stay competitive. As companies look to make cuts to offset the tax, research and development is often the first one to go. This tradeoff undermines the future of the industry and puts discovery of new breakthrough medical technologies at risk. In other words, it is putting the livelihoods of people and their health at risk.

According to figures from the U.S. Department of Commerce, the United States medical technology industry lost nearly 29,000 jobs while the medical device tax was in effect. When the medical device tax was suspended, most medical device companies reinvested most of their savings into their innovative strategies and improving United States facilities. But long-term investment has been postponed because of the threat that it might come back.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that, by repealing the medical device tax, we are going to be taking money out of Medicare. That is absolutely ridiculous. As a matter of fact, there was a \$700 billion cut to Medicare to pay for the Affordable Care Act.

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Utah.

Mrs. LOVE. Mr. Speaker, Utah's Merit Medical was planning on spending \$1.5 million for salary increases and 401(k) benefits for hourly workers, but they can't, unless this tax is repealed.

Merit Medical is also planning a \$60 million R&D facility, but it is now on hold because of the tax. In Utah, with the last suspension, BD increased R&D spending from 6 percent to 6.5 percent in sales.

If this tax does not get repealed, the industry is forced to start making payments. Investments will be the trade-off, and innovation will be stifled. This means less jobs for Americans, a less competitive America in the medical device industry, and, potentially, an increase in the medical cost for our constituents so that this industry can pay for the tax.

It is time to make sure that we put money back into the hands of Americans, American businesses, and out of the hands of government.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, anybody who doesn't understand what \$2.3 trillion of tax cuts and further tax cuts of this measure mean as a threat to Medicare and Social Security and Medicaid down the road, that is a short-term view of where we are headed financially in America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA).

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to say I represent the Golden State of California, and I am proud to say that California was the first State in the Union to implement, to accept the Affordable Care Act a number of years ago, and when we did so, we knew it was a work in progress. After all, Medicare continues to be a work in progress after 60 years. One of those areas we knew we had to change was the medical device tax.

In California, there are over 1,000 medical technology companies, many of which are small to medium, that employ more than 70,000 Californians. Many of those live and work in my district, and these are good-paying middle class jobs.

The research and development of groundbreaking medical technology helps improve patient care and treatments not only for Americans, but for folks throughout the world.

In recognition of the medical tax device's negative impact on innovation and investment, Congress delayed its implementation on two separate occasions. Unfortunately, the temporary suspension of this tax is scheduled to expire at the end of this year. If reinstated, this tax will impede future investments and domestic innovation and restrain hiring and job growth.

Since research and development in this area of technology takes a number of years, the uncertainty about the future of this tax will delay essential research and development and growth in many areas of the State of California. That is why repealing the medical tax device permanently will encourage economic growth and hiring in Orange County and in my area.

The medical device industry represents jobs not only for the next gen-

eration, but for the next 20 to 30 years in this country. Mr. Speaker, therefore, I urge passage of H.R. 184.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for sharing his perspective from California. I think of Minnesota and California and Massachusetts and some other States that have a propensity of strong ecosystems of medical technology, and those jobs, we know, are very, very important. We want to see those continue.

I just want to mention, Mr. Speaker, what we don't want to go back to, because these are the stories we were hearing prior to our suspension, why we need to permanently repeal this tax.

I remember speaking to a company in Plymouth, Minnesota. They were pretty clear. They said: Instead of 10 projects, we are only going to have 6 projects funded with this tax in place. That means too few engineers, too few technicians while that device tax was in effect.

I talked to another company that was actually in Texas. They had laid off an employee that had been employed for 22 years, and then they had laid off 25 people, deferring the hiring of another 15 employees because of that tax being put in place.

Another medical company in Shoreview, Minnesota, told me they had to borrow \$100,000 a month from the bank just to pay the device tax because the tax was on sales and revenue, not on profits. That is a high-risk tragedy, Mr. Speaker, in order to keep these companies alive.

There is a company in New York that was trying to finance a new cancer therapy using gamma radiation, and they struggled to raise the necessary funds that were necessary to complete the project because the medical device tax was discouraging investment in lifesaving innovation.

And then, Mr. Speaker, I remember having a conversation with an employee, someone from my district, and he came up to me and said: Mr. PAULSEN, I have been employed at this medical device company for 21 years, a strong medical device manufacturer, but because of the tax, I have lost my job. Now his family struggled at his new job because his wages were \$40,000 less than where he was before he was laid off, all because of that device tax. His vacation time was cut in half, and his healthcare costs also went up.

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

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, but I am prepared to close.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume while we wait for one additional speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me just remind folks where we are right now. Think back to 2013, 2014 when this tax was first put in place. We heard earlier from one of our

colleagues who had said: Do you know what? The medical device industry was a part of putting together the Affordable Care Act, and they agreed to this.

Actually, that is a myth. It is not true. I have talked to numerous medical device manufacturers, small, medium, and large, as well as the associations, that said they had no part in agreeing to that. In fact, when this dollar amount came up as a part of the Affordable Care Act, they backed into it. There was some dollar amount assigned, and that is how he backed into a 2.3 percent excise tax.

And, again, just a reminder, an excise tax is a tax on your sales and revenue, not on your profits. For companies that take 8 to 10 years to become profitable in the first place, that is a high hurdle when you are trying to attract new capital, new investors in order to take the risk that this new technology is going to be successful.

You have already got to go through the FDA. You have got to go through a rigorous process, go through a gold standard, and then you have to make sure that you are going to potentially have CMS offer a reimbursement policy for your devices.

So there is a whole host of, or a multitude of, risk factors that go in already when companies are thinking of starting up to actually be a part of this strong ecosystem of providing medical technology and lifesaving innovation that goes out to help our patients.

The good news is, if we keep this industry strong in America, if we can repeal this tax permanently, we will not only be improving healthcare outcomes around the world; we will be keeping those jobs here. We will be keeping the headquarters here in the United States.

So it is not just some of the tax reforms you pass, Mr. Speaker. It is about giving more certainty and more predictability by repealing a tax that never should have been put in place in the first place.

And I think with strong bipartisan support, both on a vote today in the House and potentially once again in the Senate—I think the last time we had a vote leading up to President Obama signing a temporary suspension of the device tax, we had enough votes in the House to override a Presidential veto. That is what got the attention of the Senate. That is what got the attention of the President at that time, and we actually made it the law of the land, 2-year suspension. We renewed another 2-year suspension.

But now is the time, Mr. Speaker, to actually make this permanent, to put ourselves in a position to make this repeal permanent, to put ourselves in a position where we can guarantee that American innovation is going to be strong and steadfast for years and decades to come. We can keep this American success story alive.

We have got a host of other challenges, I know, as we look towards the medical device industry. We have a hearing going on right now on trade,

for instance. We don't need to do anything else with potential tariffs or quotas in different areas that put additional uncertainty on this industry, on these high-paying, high-quality jobs. So this is one initial effort that we can make today on the House floor, with a strong bipartisan vote, to make sure a permanent repeal is also the law of the land.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking around for my colleague from Indiana, who I think is on the way right now.

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are directed to remove their conversations from the floor.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address the reference that my friend from Minnesota offered a moment ago when he referred to the device tax as mythology.

I negotiated that agreement with the industry. They asked for the following: that it be applied to foreign competition. We said yes. This was done in Speaker PELOSI's office with the industry.

They suggested at the time that the 5 percent tax be cut to 2.3 percent. We went along with that. Even though the United States Senate had sent over a revenue package of \$40 billion, we cut it by \$20 billion.

So that wasn't mythology. It was the way the institution once worked, how we negotiate, go back and forth, discuss, and then come to rational conclusions that might help and acknowledge the 20 million more Americans who have coverage now under the Affordable Care Act—20 million Americans.

I want to say something at this point, Mr. Speaker, if I may.

In the State of Massachusetts, do you know what we are really proud of on this day? One hundred percent of the children in Massachusetts are covered with health insurance, and 97 percent of the adults in our State are covered with health insurance. It is a remarkable statistic, and it is based, in some measure, on the negotiations we had with respective industries to get this legislation over the goal line.

So I know exactly what happened here, and I understand fully what negotiations mean. But we rejected the \$40 billion price tag that came from the U.S. Senate, cut it in half and said to the industry: This is, we hope and expect, your share of making sure that 20 million more Americans have health insurance.

That is what this issue is about: accessibility, earlier stages of prevention, getting people into health insurance earlier in life. That is precisely what we did with the Affordable Care Act.

And let me just say this, if I may, as well. Let me talk about the mandate, while they are waiting for their next speaker to arrive. Here is what makes the mandate and its importance.

Why should the rest of us in America pay \$1,000 a year in our health insurance plans because there are those who don't want to buy health insurance and end up in the emergency rooms of America, and they thumb their noses at us on the way out because of uncompensated care and they don't pay the bill?

So do you know what would be great, Mr. Speaker? If we all knew the day that our house was going to burn down, then—do you know what?—the day before, we would buy homeowners insurance.

□ 1630

If we all knew the day that we were going to get in that accident, we would buy automobile insurance. But the truth is that insurance spreads risk, and we all know we don't know when those things might occur, so we buy insurance in advance.

So, today, 20 million more Americans have insurance because of what we did with the Affordable Care Act. This idea that you can continually sabotage it and take it apart piece by piece makes no sense.

On this particular issue with the device revenue, I can tell you and I can state to you, under oath, Mr. Speaker, what we did to negotiate this contribution to making America's healthcare more effective and better for all members of the American family, the understanding being that, at the end of life, if you have earlier intervention with healthcare, the end of life might be a heck of a lot more pleasant along the way.

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI), who has been a champion of not only repealing this tax, but fighting hard for the medical device industry in her home State.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 184, the Protect Medical Innovation Act.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation will permanently repeal the job-killing medical device tax. Hoosiers are proud to be leaders in medical innovation with more than 300 medical device manufacturers in our State that support nearly 55,000 jobs. These are high-paying jobs, with workers in the industry earning about \$50,000 per year, on average.

However, after ObamaCare's medical device tax took effect, the industry lost almost 29,000 good-paying jobs nationwide from 2012 to 2015, according to Department of Commerce data. That is why Congress took bipartisan action in 2015 to suspend the tax for 2 years, and did so again earlier this year. But if it goes back into effect after 2019, it will impede new discoveries and stifle medical innovation while destroying good jobs.

Right now, our economy is booming because of historic tax cuts and regulatory reforms, and we need to keep that momentum going. It is time to

end the medical device tax once and for all. Permanently repealing this job-killing tax will protect American workers and help patients access the lifesaving medical technology they need.

Mr. Speaker, the medical device tax would have a devastating impact on Hoosier workers and people from across the country who depend on these products. The Protect Medical Innovation Act will boost American innovation and manufacturing, and it will encourage medical research and development that make a real difference in people's lives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this vital piece of legislation.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the gentlewoman from Indiana, my friend, just mentioned the tax cut, so let me just point this out. We have gone from a rate of 35 percent in the corporate world to 21 percent, a 14 point cut in the corporate tax rate, and we are being asked to do this on top of it.

Now, Medicare purchases most of the medical devices in America—taxpayer supported. It is an earned benefit. But here is the other important part of it that I think bears some noting today. It is a terrific industry. It is not in dispute. It is an important industry in America.

But when the gentlewoman says: "Well, the economy is booming because of these tax cuts," a reminder, a fact, not from my Twitter account, but stated on the House floor: The American economy has been growing for 94 straight months.

The idea that this all happened 500 days ago doesn't stand up underneath the magnifying glass of critical analysis. The stock market has been going up since March of 2009.

So when I look at the corporate cut—astounding, by the way—remember, President Obama said we should have a corporate rate of 28 percent and the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, a good friend of mine, a Republican, he said, no, we should have 25 percent.

So what did the other side do? Let's see, the difference between 28 and 25? Aha, it is 21. I mean, I haven't figured that out yet.

So, day after day, we roll through here with another tax cut proposal, and we watch the deficits and the debt go to \$20 trillion. Whatever happened to the Republican idea of fiscal rectitude, which year after year they lectured us on?

We negotiated this agreement over the device tax, Mr. Speaker, guaranteed. It was accepted by the industry. Again, we applied it to foreign competition. They would be taxed at the same rate. Medicare would remain the largest vendor, the largest purchaser of medical devices.

This is a step backward on America's healthcare plan. If they would just give the Affordable Care Act a chance to

work, instead of these deliberate efforts day after day to sabotage it, we could move on with the business of the country.

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, as I close, let me remind my colleague, because he had mentioned eliminating the individual mandate as a part of the tax reform that was enacted recently, according to the IRS, 79 percent of the 6.6 million people who paid the penalty in 2015 had incomes below \$50,000. These are middle class people.

Mr. NEAL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PAULSEN. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, what did the Republican majority do to the cost subsidies for those people?

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, on the individual mandate, 6.6 million people who paid the penalty had incomes below \$50,000. These are middle class people who had to pay the fine instead of buying overpriced ObamaCare coverage that they could not afford. Now, starting in 2019, they are not going to have to do that anymore. Republicans think that is a good thing.

Let me close back on the bill, though, Mr. Speaker.

The good news is that both Republicans and Democrats here today agree and understand that the medical device excise tax does more harm than good, and it has to be repealed. We heard testimony and speakers today on both sides of the aisle. We will have a strong, bipartisan vote to repeal this tax permanently.

We have already had a suspension twice. But we need to give this industry certainty so that we can make sure that this American success story not only survives, but thrives.

It is about high-paying jobs with net exports around the world. This makes sure that patients not only in the United States are going to have access to new medical technology devices, for baby boomers, seniors, and those getting up in their elder years with new devices. This is really critical for the innovation that is going to help to make sure that we are protecting patients around the world, keeping headquarters here, keeping jobs here, and improving healthcare outcomes.

Today, we have an opportunity to help. It is helping those small startups that are part of the very ecosystem that has made this industry so strong in the United States that provides these jobs, and making sure that entrepreneurs, doctors, engineers, and folks who come up with an idea in the backyard or in the garage can see their idea come to fruition.

So let's remove this threat to innovation. Let's remove this job-killing tax once and for all. There are 277 cosponsors in the House. How many bills actually get that many cosponsors of Democrats and Republicans? Let's continue to show the American public that

what we are doing here in Washington on this issue is results oriented, is solution oriented, and we are sensitive, and we understand that.

Mr. Speaker, I ask everyone to vote for the passage of H.R. 184, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 1011, 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. PAULSEN. 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.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2069

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 2069, the Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2017.

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

There was no objection.

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 4 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1650

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas) at 4 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.

PROTECT MEDICAL INNOVATION ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 184) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices, 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 283, nays 132, not voting 13, as follows:

Abraham	Goodlatte	Palazzo
Aderholt	Gosar	Palmer
Aguilar	Gottheimer	Panetta
Allen	Gowdy	Paulsen
Amash	Granger	Pearce
Amodei	Graves (GA)	Perry
Arrington	Graves (LA)	Peters
Babin	Green, Gene	Peterson
Bacon	Griffith	Pittenger
Banks (IN)	Grothman	Poe (TX)
Barletta	Guthrie	Poliquin
Barr	Handel	Polis
Barragán	Harper	Posey
Barton	Harris	Ratcliffe
Bera	Hensarling	Reed
Bergman	Herrera Beutler	Reichert
Biggs	Hice, Jody B.	Renacci
Bilirakis	Higgins (LA)	Rice (NY)
Bishop (GA)	Hill	Rice (SC)
Bishop (MI)	Holding	Roby
Bishop (UT)	Hollingsworth	Roe (TN)
Blum	Hudson	Rogers (AL)
Bost	Huizenga	Rogers (KY)
Boyle, Brendan	Hultgren	Rohrabacher
F.	Hunter	Rokita
Brady (TX)	Hurd	Rooney, Francis
Brat	Issa	Rooney, Thomas
Brooks (AL)	Jenkins (KS)	J.
Brooks (IN)	Jenkins (WV)	Ros-Lehtinen
Brownley (CA)	Johnson (LA)	Rosen
Buchanan	Johnson (OH)	Roskam
Buck	Johnson, Sam	Ross
Bucshon	Jordan	Rothfus
Budd	Joyce (OH)	Rouzer
Burgess	Katko	Royce (CA)
Bustos	Keating	Ruiz
Byrne	Kelly (MS)	Russell
Calvert	Kelly (PA)	Rutherford
Carbajal	Khanna	Sanford
Cárdenas	Kilmer	Scalise
Carter (GA)	King (IA)	Schneider
Carter (TX)	King (NY)	Schweikert
Chabot	Kinzing	Scott, Austin
Cheney	Knight	Scott, David
Clark (MA)	Krishnamoorthi	Sensenbrenner
Cloud	Kuster (NH)	Sessions
Coffman	Kustoff (TN)	Sewell (AL)
Cole	Labrador	Shimkus
Collins (GA)	LaHood	Shuster
Collins (NY)	LaMalfa	Simpson
Comer	Lamb	Sinema
Comstock	Lamborn	Sires
Conaway	Lance	Smith (NE)
Cook	Latta	Smith (NJ)
Correa	Lawson (FL)	Smith (TX)
Costello (PA)	Lesko	Smucker
Cramer	Lewis (MN)	Stefanik
Crawford	Lieu, Ted	Stewart
Crist	Lipinski	Stivers
Cuellar	LoBiondo	Suozi
Culberson	Loebach	Swalwell (CA)
Curbelo (FL)	Loudermilk	Taylor
Curtis	Love	Tenney
Davidson	Lucas	Thompson (PA)
Davis (CA)	Luetkemeyer	Thornberry
Davis, Rodney	Lynch	Tipton
Delaney	MacArthur	Tonko
DelBene	Maloney, Sean	Torres
Denham	Marchant	Trott
DeSantis	Marino	Turner
DesJarlais	Marshall	Upton
Diaz-Balart	Massie	Valadao
Dingell	Mast	Vargas
Donovan	McCarthy	Veasey
Duffy	McCaul	Vela
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Wagner
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Walberg
Dunn	McKinley	Walden
Emmer	McMorris	Walker
Estes (KS)	Rodgers	Walorski
Faso	McSally	Walters, Mimi
Ferguson	Meadows	Weber (TX)
Fitzpatrick	Messer	Webster (FL)
Fleischmann	Mitchell	Wenstrup
Flores	Moolenaar	Westerman
Fortenberry	Mooney (WV)	Williams
Fox	Moulton	Wilson (SC)
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Wittman
Gabbard	Murphy (FL)	Womack
Gaetz	Newhouse	Woodall
Gallagher	Nolan	Yoho
Garrett	Norcross	Young (AK)
Gianforte	Norman	Young (IA)
Gibbs	Nunes	Zeldin
Gohmert	O'Halleran	
Gonzalez (TX)	Olson	

[Roll No. 372]

YEAS—283

NAYS—132

Adams	Gallego	Nadler
Bass	Garamendi	Napolitano
Beatty	Gomez	Neal
Beyer	Green, Al	O'Rourke
Blumenauer	Grijalva	Pallone
Blunt Rochester	Gutiérrez	Pascarell
Bonamici	Hastings	Payne
Brady (PA)	Heck	Pelosi
Brown (MD)	Higgins (NY)	Perlmutter
Butterfield	Himes	Pingree
Capuano	Hoyer	Pocan
Carson (IN)	Huffman	Price (NC)
Cartwright	Jackson Lee	Quigley
Castor (FL)	Jayapal	Raskin
Castro (TX)	Jeffries	Richmond
Chu, Judy	Johnson (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Cicilline	Johnson, E. B.	Ruppersberger
Clarke (NY)	Jones	Rush
Clay	Kaptur	Ryan (OH)
Cleaver	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez
Clyburn	Kennedy	Sarbanes
Cohen	Kihuen	Schakowsky
Connolly	Kildee	Schiff
Cooper	Kind	Schrader
Costa	Langevin	Scott (VA)
Courtney	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Crowley	Larson (CT)	Shea-Porter
Cummings	Lawrence	Sherman
Davis, Danny	Levin	Smith (WA)
DeFazio	Lewis (GA)	Soto
DeGette	Lofgren	Takano
DeLauro	Lowenthal	Thompson (CA)
Demings	Lowey	Thompson (MS)
DeSaulnier	Lujan Grisham,	Titus
Deutch	M.	Tsongas
Doggett	Luján, Ben Ray	Velázquez
Doyle, Michael	Maloney,	Visclosky
F.	Carolyn B.	Wasserman
Engel	Matsui	Schultz
Eshoo	McCollum	Waters, Maxine
Espallat	McEachin	Watson Coleman
Esty (CT)	McGovern	Welch
Evans	McNerney	Wilson (FL)
Foster	Meeks	Yarmuth
Frankel (FL)	Meng	
Fudge		

NOT VOTING—13

Black	Hartzler	Speier
Blackburn	Long	Walz
Ellison	Moore	Yoder
Graves (MO)	Noem	
Hanabusa	Smith (MO)	

□ 1715

Mr. POLIS changed his 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. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, because I am at home recuperating from a medical procedure, I unavoidably missed the following vote on July 24. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on rollcall No. 372, I would have voted "yea" (Passage of H.R. 184—Protect Medical Innovation Act of 2017).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent on rollcall Votes 368, 369, 370, 371 and 372. I would have voted "no" on all five rollcall votes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

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

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

THE AMERICAN LEGION 100TH ANNIVERSARY
COMMEMORATIVE
COIN ACT

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1182) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1182

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 "National Flood Insurance Program Extension Act of 2018".

SEC. 2. PROGRAM EXTENSION.

(a) FINANCING.—Section 1309(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4016(a)) is amended by striking "September 30, 2017" and inserting "November 30, 2018".

(b) PROGRAM EXPIRATION.—Section 1319 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4026) is amended by striking "September 30, 2017" and inserting "November 30, 2018".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to do something I do not often do, and that is: I have asked my leadership to put a bill on the floor that I do not support.

I am talking about the bill that would provide for a non-reform reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program through the end of November. To make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, I believe this program needs to be reauthorized, and the House has done its work. The House passed a bill with reforms last November. Never underestimate the Senate's capacity to do nothing.

Unfortunately, the Senate has done nothing. But this is a program, Mr. Speaker, that continues to be in dire need of reform. And now, we have reauthorized it without reforms, not once, not twice, not three times, not four times, not five times, but six times since the Financial Services Committee first reported this bill out. Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, in America, we lost 116 lives last year to flooding, with billions

and billions of dollars of property loss, and, yet, we have a program unreformed that incents people to live in harm's way. We should not be doing this, Mr. Speaker.

I went and I visited with those who survived Hurricane Harvey, people that were close to your district, people whose homes had flooded three times in the last 8 years, and I heard harrowing tales of survival. And, yet, we have a program that says, you know what? We are going to help rebuild your same home in the same fashion in the same place. Hope you survive next time. That is just wrong, Mr. Speaker.

And, yes, we need more mitigation money. We need better flood control projects. The House bill had more flood mitigation money than any other reform bill, but this bill before us has no reforms.

Finances: This is a program that the taxpayer has subsidized so far by \$40 billion. Some of the debt has been forgiven, but it runs a billion-and-a-half dollar deficit every single year, Mr. Speaker. It is unsustainable. The Congressional Budget Office says it, the GAO says it, the OMB says it. It is an unsustainable program. The finances do not work.

And then last, but not least, Mr. Speaker, it is a government monopoly. It is a government monopoly when people could, through a competitive marketplace, actually get more affordable flood insurance. And that is just not a theory. That is happening as we speak.

In the small little bit of the marketplace that is open to competition, people are saving hundreds, if not thousands of dollars in places like Pennsylvania, and in places like Florida. We had testimony in our committee. And so it is just rather disappointing that, again, we face the seventh time of not reforming a program that has no market competition, and that is fiscally unsustainable, and, yet, we continue to see premiums skyrocket in the government monopoly.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman on the other side of the aisle, Mr. BLUMENAUER from Oregon. They tried to put together a reform package with the most minimal level of reforms, and, unfortunately, it did not appear to carry the day.

I suspect we will soon cast, with an overwhelming vote, a clean reauthorization, but I don't think they are going to take it up in the Senate. Maybe I am wrong, in which case, we will have to deal with this. And I would just simply again ask, particularly for the people on my side of the aisle—I think it helps maybe once or twice a month if we ask ourselves Ronald Reagan's eternal question: "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

Mr. Speaker, I invite somebody to answer that question for me, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, since the National Flood Insurance Program's multiyear authorization expired on September 30, 2017, ideological differences have led Congress to pass six short-term extensions, and have even allowed the program to briefly lapse twice since the government shutdowns.

More than 5 million families rely on the NFIP for affordable flood insurance coverage. Communities rely on the NFIP for flood maps and mitigation assistance, and small businesses rely on the NFIP to pick up the pieces when the inevitable storm hits. Yet, the long-term stability of this critical program continues to fall victim to partisan politics.

Mr. Speaker, 2017 was an absolutely catastrophic year in terms of hurricanes and other national disasters. In 2017, for the first time on record, three Category 4 hurricanes made landfall in the United States, serving as painful reminders of the importance of affordable and accessible flood insurance.

While Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria may be a distant memory for some, families affected by these storms are still just beginning their long road to recovery, and we continue to learn about the challenges that families in Puerto Rico face with no signs of leadership from the Trump administration.

We are here today in the midst of the 2018 hurricane season with no credible plan to do anything differently from the partisan gamesmanship that has brought the NFIP to the brink of a lapse several times already this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply disappointed that Congress continues to miss opportunities to responsibly help homeowners, businesses, and renters who all need access to affordable flood insurance by taking sensible steps to stabilize flood insurance premiums, deal with the NFIP's debt and invest in up-to-date and accurate flood maps.

Instead, the House has passed controversial and ideological reforms that make flood insurance more expensive, less available, and less fair, which is, obviously, going nowhere in the Senate.

Given the critical importance of the NFIP to our housing market, I am pleased that we are taking the small step today of reauthorizing the program for 4 months to at least provide some level of certainty to businesses and families, but let us not be fooled into thinking that our work is done. I have led the effort for years to provide long-term reauthorizations of the NFIP that also ensure the affordability and the availability of flood insurance, and I will continue to do so when this latest short-term extension expires in November.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I am now very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the majority whip.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding,

and I really want to thank my colleague, Mr. MACARTHUR from New Jersey, for his leadership in bringing this amendment forward, which would reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program on a short-term basis through hurricane season.

Why are we here, Mr. Speaker? We are here because, first of all, the House did take strong action to pass a 5-year reauthorization of NFIP that included really important reforms, reforms that I was happy to work with the chairman on to pass through the House.

□ 1730

But, ultimately, as the bill went over to the Senate, we kept hearing story after story that the Senate was going to pass something, and then a month would go by and another month would go by, and, ultimately, the Senate still hasn't passed anything to reauthorize this program. So it leaves us here literally days before the program expires.

Mr. Speaker, we can't play some game of chicken with the lives of millions of families that represent, by the way, all 50 States. All 50 States participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. This isn't something that just applies to coastal communities. You have got every inland State as well that have families that rely on this program to work.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of program would we like to see? I would love to see a vibrant marketplace with private sector company after private sector company that would offer options to families just like we have with car insurance or homeowners insurance. But we don't have that today. So what we need to do is usher in reforms like the Ross-Castor legislation, Mr. Speaker, that I am a cosponsor of. Ross-Castor, by the way, was included in the House-passed bill.

There are other important reforms that encourage communities to get better mapping from FEMA. Some of those reforms were included in the Royce-Blumenauer legislation which, was also in the House-passed bill.

So we could talk about the reforms that are needed, and I encourage us to get those kind of reforms done. But at the midnight hour, let's at least keep this program going for a few more months while we continue negotiating, and let's get a long-term deal that actually has the reforms that will make this a sustainable program with private sector involvement for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER), who is the ranking member of the Housing and Insurance Subcommittee of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to support the House amendment to S. 1182, the National Flood Insurance Program Extension Act of 2018. This bill would provide a clean, 4-month extension for the NFIP.

Now, I do plan to vote in favor of this bill, but I do so with deep consternation that we are, yet again, passing a short-term reauthorization. This will be the seventh short-term extension for the NFIP in the last 10 months. This is somewhat embarrassing, or should be, to all of us.

If we fail to reauthorize the program, the NFIP will not be able to issue new policies, and borrowing authority would be limited. A lapse in authorization during the height of hurricane season could have serious ramifications for communities that have already weathered last year's severe storms.

When the Financial Services Committee began to consider the NFIP reauthorization, I had advocated for a long-term reauthorization. I met with Mr. DUFFY many, many times. We discussed that a long-term reauthorization of 5 or even 10 years would provide policyholders and stakeholders with certainty. It would give industry stability, communities a chance to develop mitigation plans, and policyholders peace of mind.

Affordability must remain a central component of any long-term plan to revamp the NFIP. Rates are already increasing for many policyholders, and we need to ensure that homeowners who rely on the NFIP for protection are not priced out of the program.

Additionally, I have urged my colleagues to consider the forgiving of the NFIP's debt. Though the NFIP has been self-sustaining for many years, extreme and unexpected damage following Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy left the NFIP with a \$20 billion debt. Now the NFIP continues to pay over \$400 million a year in interest, and this is ridiculous.

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Missouri an additional 1 minute.

Mr. CLEAVER. The NFIP continues to pay over \$400 million a year in interest. That is money that could go towards making improvements in the program or helping enhance affordability. We need to wipe the slate clean and give the NFIP a fresh start.

Lastly, enhancing mapping technology and increasing litigation resources will go a long way in improving the program and preparing communities for prevention and recovery efforts.

To be sure, I am pleased that we are voting to keep the NFIP up and running for the next 4 months, but I remain concerned that we have been unable to agree on a long-term plan. I again urge my colleagues to come to the table in a bipartisan manner for a solution and for the updating of the NFIP.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA), who is the chairman of our Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments Subcommittee.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with deep hesitation in supporting another clean extension of the National Flood Insurance Program through November of this year. While I completely agree that letting this program lapse in the middle of hurricane season is deeply problematic, it is inconceivable to me that even extremely modest reforms to this troubled program are not included in this legislation.

The House amendment to S. 1182 is a simple piece of legislation with a simple extension. What is notable, however, is the fact that the legislation contains none of the reforms passed by this House in a bipartisan manner in November, nor does the legislation contain any of the more modest reforms recently introduced by my colleagues from California and Oregon, Representatives ROYCE and BLUMENAUER.

Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Missouri said, this will be extension number 7 in less than a year. This is even after Congress forgave that \$16 billion in NFIP debt, all while fewer than 2 percent of the 5 million policies that are out there have absorbed more than \$8 billion in payments.

These numbers are staggering. Instead of passing clean extension after clean extension, the Senate should—no, wait a minute—the Senate must do its job and take up bipartisan reform that we passed in November.

I urge my colleagues to be responsible and work toward crafting a long-term reauthorization of this, a program that needs to shift towards risk-based rates, increasing private sector involvement in the program, and to address repetitive loss properties, all of which will put the program on a more sustainable financial path.

I grew up in a floodplain in Michigan right along Lake Michigan and the Great Lakes. This is real for those of us in west Michigan. But at the end of the day, with this legislation, a “no” vote is not a lack of willingness or interest to address this issue, as it may be portrayed; but, equally, a “yes” vote should not be acceptance of the status quo. Hopefully, by this bill moving forward, there may be action in the Senate.

Frankly, at the end of the day, Members are being put in an impossible no-win situation; not for us, Mr. Speaker, but for our constituents, the taxpayers, it is a no-win situation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN), who is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I, too, am not enthralled with the idea of a temporary fix. My preference is a long-term remedy.

While we have different reasons for being opposed to a temporary fix, the truth is we have no choice at this point. In about a week, the program will expire.

I know what happens when we are, unfortunately, coping with hurricanes such as Katrina, which cost us \$160 billion. I saw what happened in New Orleans, Louisiana, after Katrina. The ranking member and I were there on the ground to see how people who had been quite prosperous were now having to abandon what was their home, and they had to move to other places. The Astrodome in Houston, Texas, became the home for many thousands of people who were fleeing the aftermath of Katrina.

I saw what happened after Harvey and how people were suffering and trying to go back into homes that were completely devastated. They had nowhere else to go.

So we have no choice. We must reauthorize. And 4 months, while it seems like it is an inappropriate amount of time, does give us some additional time. My hope is that we will come to some conclusion that will be acceptable such that we can have a long-term extension.

The Realtors are constantly calling to my attention the need for certainty in this program. It helps the economy to have certainty. My belief is we can have certainty, and we must extend.

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. My belief is we must have certainty and we must extend. My belief also is this: If not us, who will extend it? If not now, when will we extend it?

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), who is the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a very senior member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, we stand here doing what we have done, I guess, 38 times now since 1998, and that is passing an extension of the National Flood Insurance Program without the much-needed reforms that should be in that program. This is unacceptable.

Subsidized flood insurance represents what economists call a moral hazard, and let me tell you why. We tell Americans that if you buy flood insurance from Uncle Sam, no matter how many times your house floods, we will give you money to rebuild it.

We haven't worked to decrease that moral hazard through reform; rather, we have embraced and refueled it, and we make it more difficult for people to move than rebuild.

We fail to encourage communities to mitigate flood risk. We continue to build in high-risk areas. The clearest sign of moral hazard is the number of repeatedly flooded properties that are rebuilt with little deference to mitigation.

I will give you some examples:

A \$90,000 home in Missouri has been flooded, now, 34 times, at a cost of more than \$600,000;

A \$56,000 home in Louisiana flooded more than 40 times at a cost of \$430,000; A \$72,000 home in Texas that flooded again last year cost taxpayers over \$1 million in payouts.

I came to the floor today hoping to support a bill that Mr. BLUMENAUER and I authored that would have extended the flood program with what The Wall Street Journal called de minimis policy changes that have broad, bipartisan support, which would do something about the fact that you have got fewer than 2 percent of the 5 million policies that have absorbed more than \$8 billion of the payments because we don't have these reforms. That is not in this bill before us.

Unfortunately, I oppose this can-kicking exercise, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), who has long pushed for reducing flood risk in this country.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this, and I am pleased to follow my friend from California (Mr. ROYCE).

This is troubling for me, his reference here to 38 extensions without reform. I have been working on this for 20 years. This is the 41st time, and we had one back in 2004 with my friend, Doug Bereuter, where we had some small steps, but they were anticipatory of being able to make greater reforms.

I am vexed that we continue to move forward and dodge some hard facts. We are subsidizing too much for people who grow complacent.

I am concerned about affordability. There are things we can do to deal with affordability, but that doesn't mean to have massive subsidization for people who don't need it and, in fact, encourage people to be in harm's way and, in fact, after they are flooded out, to go back, putting them in harm's way again.

There are simple, commonsense steps we can take. There were things that Mr. ROYCE and I had that are sort of the lowest common denominator. I am deeply troubled that we are going to do this again without dealing with the problems.

I just want to say that it is not just financial hardship and it is not just wasting of money. Our failure to reform the Flood Insurance Program puts people at risk. Every one of these massive events shows that people will go back, trying to deal with a family member; they are dealing with their business, or they are dealing with a pet.

□ 1745

People die because we fail to take steps to reform and make it work right.

I appreciate the ranking member, the chair, Mr. DUFFY, and Mr. ROYCE. There is a path forward. This bill is not the path forward.

I don't want it to lapse. I don't want disruption. But it is hard for me to sit here and vote "yes" for something that doesn't do the minimum. We don't do anybody any favors along this path.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), the chairman of our Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, the National Flood Insurance Program is critical to millions of Americans who need access to affordable flood insurance, but it is also in desperate need of reform. The current construct of the NFIP doesn't serve anyone well. Taxpayers are left unprotected, and the program continues to offer antiquated policies and provides insufficient coverage. FEMA continues to hold a monopoly in the flood insurance space, leaving policyholders with no freedom to choose a policy that works best for them.

Mr. Speaker, last year, we came together as a body and passed comprehensive NFIP reform. Unfortunately, the Senate has failed to do anything with those even modest reforms that we had in that bill. Tomorrow, we are probably going to pass another bill and kick the can down the road. We will probably do the same thing in November.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this bill because I think it is time to make some reforms. It is time to take a stand and do something to protect the taxpayers who are on the hook for all of what I call the mismanagement of this agency and for these continued risks to individuals who are policyholders of these policies who continue to live in dangerous areas.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), who has been a true leader on the National Flood Insurance Program. He comes with a very, very important background. He was chairman of Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority. So I am pleased to have worked with him, to have talked with him, and to understand that we need him when we are working on the reforms that we will work on after we pass this bill.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this discussion needs to have a reset. It needs to have a reset because I keep hearing people sit here talking about repetitive floods and how there is a certain set of these flood victims who are costing this program all sorts of problems and money.

Mr. Speaker, do you really believe people want to be flooded? Do you think people want to have everything they own underwater and have to throw it all out?

Anybody who believes that has obviously never stepped foot in a flooded home, never spoken to a flood victim.

Do you really think people intentionally want to build their home in a

place that is going to flood so all their family heirlooms are flooded and lost? That whole concept is irrational.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that all of us want this program to be solvent. We all want to have a solution. We all want to have reforms. The things that are being pushed aren't the reforms that are going to result in solvency. The reforms that are being pushed are strictly a defense. You don't go out on the field and just play defense.

We need to lean forward. We need to integrate some of our efforts on mitigation, some of our Corps of Engineers levee projects, some of our hazard mitigation grant program funds through FEMA, look where we can protect areas and where that is the most cost-effective solution, and not tell everyone: You are out of your house, or we are going to charge you unaffordable rates.

Mr. Speaker, think about this for just a minute. I represent the State of Louisiana. We drain from Montana to two Canadian provinces to New York. All that water comes and drains down through our State. It is one of the largest watersheds in the world. More water is coming to us now.

So, yes, we are more vulnerable. But the people who live in these homes and businesses are innocent. Folks are trying to charge them more for something they have no control over. That is not American. That is not okay.

We are in hurricane season right now, Mr. Speaker. We are in hurricane season, where we need to provide people certainty. Let's be crystal clear on what this bill is and what it is not. A "yes" vote provides people certainty during hurricane season. It provides certainty to Realtors, homeowners, and homebuilders. A "no" vote kills the National Flood Insurance Program and leaves people with complete uncertainty and in limbo.

I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for proposing this bill and for bringing it up, because this is so important. We have had 220 disasters, each costing more than \$1 billion since 1980. In total, we spent approximately \$1.5 trillion responding to these disasters.

Mr. Speaker, there are similar programs that exist. Right now, there is Price-Anderson for nuclear power plants and TRIA for terrorism risk insurance, where the government provides a safety net. I agree that we need to reform these programs, but we need to do it in a way that does not penalize the innocent. Until we get to that point, we need to do an extension to provide certainty and to ensure we make it through hurricane season, and we have a rational debate.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR), who is also the author of the legislation for the reauthorization bill before us.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I spent about 30 years in the insurance

industry. A good deal of that time, I worked on this program. I know it, I would guess, better than anyone here, and I know what it does for people. I know its weaknesses as well.

Mr. Speaker, 140 million Americans live in coastal counties today. They are ordinary Americans, mostly of moderate means. I represent many of these folks in Ocean County, New Jersey. These are the victims of disasters like Sandy, and they absolutely depend upon this program.

In October, the House passed a bill that I worked on and I supported, a 5-year reauthorization with modest increases in premiums, increased mitigation dollars, and instilled some accountability at FEMA. It was too much reform for some, not enough for others. But it was absolutely necessary that we do that. The Senate has totally failed to act.

So, what do we do today? We hold every homeowner along the coast hostage? We cannot do that.

The NFIP program has \$30 billion of borrowing capacity. That drops to \$1 billion if this lapses. That is a modest event in this country. How do we look the American people in the eye after a storm and say: We don't have the money that you have been paying premiums for. How do we do that? How do we shut down the real estate market?

If you can't get a mortgage, you can't buy a home. And you cannot get a mortgage in coastal counties without flood insurance.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from New Jersey an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, we cannot pull the rug out from underneath the people depending on this program.

I will continue to work with the committee, with our chairman, and with the Senate, which needs to get off their back sides and do something. They have done nothing on this. I will continue to work. But in the meantime, we must continue this program until the end of hurricane season. That is why I chose the date November 30 on this bill. That is the last day of hurricane season.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues, whatever your reservations, support it, and we will keep working on reforms.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO), continuing in this bipartisan effort to pass a clean bill. He has long been a champion of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

We are 1 week away from July 31—that is 7 days—which means the deadline to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program is nearing very fast.

I would like to thank Mr. MACARTHUR for understanding the importance of avoiding a lapse in the NFIP

program and for introducing legislation that will continue coverage for millions of policyholders.

We know that flooding always has been and will continue to be the most costly natural phenomenon humanity faces.

I support this amendment to extend the National Flood Insurance Program through the end of the 2018 hurricane season and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Policyholders who rely on the program to insure their homes from flooding should not be caught in limbo while Congress works on coming together in a bipartisan manner to reauthorize the program.

While I, along with many of my colleagues, support reform in the program, the time to enact bipartisan reforms is gone for now. We have to take immediate action. If the NFIP lapses, policyholders will not have the opportunity to renew their policies and tens of thousands of home sale closings would be negatively impacted by a program lapse. We are in the middle of the 2018 hurricane season, and a major disruption in the program will be detrimental to homeowners in every corner of the United States.

It is our duty to ensure that flood insurance remains affordable and available to our constituents. Since 1968, this program has helped protect against flooding. Since its inception, the NFIP has saved the government billions of dollars.

We are providing our constituents with certainty by supporting this bill, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to extend the NFIP through the end of the 2018 hurricane season.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), the vice chairman of the Financial Institutions Subcommittee.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the House amendment to S. 1182, the National Flood Insurance Program Extension Act.

This summer has been a challenging time for western Pennsylvania, where summer storms have caused devastating floods. Residents are still recovering from the damage. At the same time, the NFIP, the National Flood Insurance Program, is close to lapsing. That is because, like so many things we have done in the House, the Senate has failed to act.

We know the NFIP is in need of reform. As a member of the Financial Services Committee, I applaud Chairman HENSARLING and DUFFY for their work to craft a bipartisan bill that we have passed. Many of these reforms in this bill are bipartisan. They are non-controversial. Pennsylvania's own insurance commissioner, a Democratic appointee, even testified before our committee in support of the private flood insurance provisions that are essential to improving consumer choice. Unfortunately, the Senate is stalled. We should continue urging Senators to take action, in the meantime.

I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this temporary extension, and I urge the Senate to get back to work.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I represent a working coastal community. Our communities in Texas District 36 were hit very, very hard by Hurricane Harvey, and our Nation's energy security relies on those communities.

Coastal energy and petrochemical refining facilities like the 150 that I represent cannot function without a steady and reliable workforce, and that workforce cannot exist without a stable housing market.

I am hopeful that my House colleagues will have the wisdom to see the necessity of passing S. 1182, so that we can maintain this national security issue.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM).

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, allowing the NFIP to expire is simply not an option. It would be catastrophic on financial markets. But more importantly, for that family sitting around the table, it would be catastrophic.

Chairman HENSARLING and Majority Whip SCALISE had a good reform bill, but the Senate needs to act. Until that happens, we have to reauthorize this, so that the next hurricane doesn't have a devastating effect on the economy and families.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I have a map in my office that shows the areas of the United States that have been impacted by flood. It is virtually the entire country.

This is the House of "We the People." This is an easy "yes" vote. I urge my colleagues on my side of the aisle to try to explain to the American people how you can vote "yes" six times on an extension and "no" the seventh time.

We did our job in November. We passed some comprehensive reforms to the NFIP, a 5-year authorization. The Senate has failed. We serve the people. This is right for the people.

I urge my colleagues to step up and vote "yes" on this extension. We don't like it, but we serve the people. This bill is for the people.

□ 1800

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), the chairman of our Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance and the author of the real flood reform bill.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding. This is a rich conversation. I am hearing my colleagues saying: We are almost out of time. We have to reauthorize the program. We can't let it expire.

The truth is, we have known for months that this program was going to expire. We have known. And many of us have tried to go to those who have disagreed on any kind of flood reform to craft a deal, to craft a compromise, but, lo and behold, there was no willingness to come together and find a compromise on flood reform.

It was: No, no. We want to come to the very end and pretend like it is a crisis and we have to extend the program because we can't put people in harm's way.

By the way, this program puts people in harm's way. We know that people don't want to flood, just like people don't want to get in a car crash and they don't want their house to burn. But if 2 times, 4 times, 10 times someone's house burns, we might say: Hey, we have got a problem with that. Maybe we should look at where you are living.

If someone gets in a car crash 2 times, 5 times, 10 times, 15 times, we might say: Hey, you have got a problem, maybe, with your driving.

But with flood insurance, we say: Listen, you can flood 1 time, 5 times, 10 times—and guess what? You can flood 10 times, 15 times, and your premiums don't go up at all. You are grandfathered in.

When my daughter crashed our car twice, guess what happened to my premiums? They went through the roof. But with flood insurance, your premiums don't go up.

Let's fix this program. There are commonsense reforms that we can implement. We are not asking for the bill that I introduced last year. We have said: Hey, maybe we can look at the severe repetitive loss properties, the ones that are only 3 percent of those in the NFIP but account for 25 percent of the losses. Maybe we could address those properties.

Maybe we could find some little bit of reform that could make the program work better. It is \$20.5 billion in debt, and we already forgave \$16 billion in debt. It is under water, to use a pun.

Let's work on fixing it. Let's help people get out of harm's way. Reform does that, Mr. Speaker. Let's get it done.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to hear that some of my friends on the opposite side of the aisle are going to cooperate in a reauthorization bill, taking into consideration many of the concerns.

I do want you to know that I sent a letter out just July 18, Mr. Speaker, 61

Members signed this letter for reauthorization. I want you to know that I understand that we have differences, and I understand that I am focused on affordability as one of the important aspects of any reauthorization bill.

I do know that some on the other side are concerned about how many times flooding will take place where people will have to be reestablished, the homes rebuilt, repairs done, how many times. I know all of that. We know all of that. But we are here now, and we have no choice. We have got to pass this bill this evening. A clear bill that will reauthorize for 4 months, and then let's have Mr. DUFFY have another shout out loud about how we are going to do a long-term reauthorization bill when we take up the bill after the 4 months.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. I am prepared to close, Mr. Speaker. I think I have the right to close.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, partisan gamesmanship and harmful reforms passed out of the house stalled the NFIP's long-term reauthorization for long enough. While I would prefer a longer term reauthorization of this important program, I strongly support today's 4-month extension to provide homeowners, businesses, renters, and communities with the certainty they deserve.

But make no mistake. This short-term reauthorization does not absolve Congress of its responsibility to reauthorize the flood insurance program for the long term. It is past time for Congress to do its job and pass a long-term reauthorization that will ensure Americans are protected this and every hurricane season to come.

Mr. Speaker, flooding is truly a humbling and equalizing force. It brings out the best of America during the worst of times, with everyone putting aside their differences to come together to help one another in our time of need.

Now it is time for Congress to do the same thing. We must put partisanship and ideology aside and ensure the continued affordability and availability of coverage for millions of Americans. The long-term reauthorization of the NFIP that ensures affordable flood insurance continues to be available to communities across our country must be Congress' priority when we return from the August recess.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, déjà vu all over again. This House has been here many times

before. In fact, we have had 41 reauthorizations of this program, 38 with no reforms.

So, a vote for S. 1182 is a vote for the status quo. And what is the status quo? The status quo is people in harm's way who have homes that flood five, six, seven, and eight times, putting their lives in danger and burdening the taxpayer at the same time.

A vote for S. 1182 is a vote to ensure that we continue to have more red ink as far as the eye can see. Mr. Speaker, \$40 billion of taxpayer subsidies to the program already. A vote for S. 1182 is a vote to protect a government monopoly.

The ranking member spoke about affordability. Well, the irony is, if we had market competition, we would have more affordable flood insurance, but we don't have market competition.

When is enough enough? When do we finally act? If we can vote down this, we can vote in favor of reforms, which is what we should have done in the first place. For us to do the same thing over and over again and expect a different result, we all know, Mr. Speaker, is the very definition of insanity.

I have no doubt this thing will be voted "aye," but it shouldn't be, and it is a sad day for the House.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1182, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

ALLOWING SERVICEMEMBERS TO TERMINATE THEIR CABLE, SATELLITE TELEVISION, AND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE CONTRACTS

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2409) to allow servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2409

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

SECTION 1. TERMINATION OF MULTICHANNEL VIDEO PROGRAMMING AND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 305A of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. 3956) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “, MULTICHANNEL VIDEO PROGRAMMING, AND INTERNET ACCESS” after “TELEPHONE”;

(2) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUALS COVERED.—For purposes of this section, the following individuals shall be treated as a servicemember covered by paragraph (1):

“(A) A spouse of a servicemember who dies while in military service or a spouse of a member of the reserve components who dies while performing duty described in subparagraph (B).

“(B) A member of the reserve components performing military service or performing full-time National Guard duty, active Guard and Reserve duty, or inactive-duty training (as such terms are defined in section 101(d) of title 10, United States Code).”;

(3) in subsection (b), by striking “cellular telephone service or telephone exchange service” and inserting “commercial mobile service, telephone exchange service, Internet access service, or multichannel video programming service”;

(4) in subsection (c), by inserting “for commercial mobile service or telephone exchange service” before “terminated”;

(5) in subsection (d), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “cellular telephone service” and inserting “commercial mobile service”;

(6) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking “For any” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For any”;

(B) by striking “If the” and inserting the following:

“(2) REINSTATEMENT OF SERVICE.—If the”;

and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) RETURN OF PROVIDER-OWNED EQUIPMENT.—If a servicemember terminates a contract under subsection (a), the servicemember shall return any provider-owned consumer premises equipment to the service provider not later than 10 days after the date on which service is disconnected.”; and

(7) in subsection (g)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4); and

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

“(1) The term ‘commercial mobile service’ has the meaning given that term in section 332(d) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d)).

“(2) The term ‘multichannel video programming service’ means a subscription video service offered by a multichannel video programming distributor, as that term is defined in section 602 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 522), over a system the distributor owns or controls.

“(3) The term ‘provider-owned consumer premises equipment’ means any equipment that a provider of Internet access service or multichannel video programming service rents or loans to a customer during the provision of that service, including gateways, routers, cable modems, voice-capable modems, CableCARDs, converters, digital adapters, remote controls, and any other equipment provided.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TITLE HEADING.—The heading for title III of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act is amended by striking “TELEPHONE” and inserting “COMMUNICATIONS”.

(2) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act is amended—

(A) by striking the item relating to title III and inserting the following:

“TITLE III—RENT, INSTALLMENT CONTRACTS, MORTGAGES, LIENS, ASSIGNMENT, LEASES, COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE CONTRACTS”;

and

(B) by striking the item relating to section 305A and inserting the following:

“Sec. 305A. Termination of telephone, multichannel video programming, and Internet access service contracts.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2409, as amended.

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, SCRA, was enacted by Congress to protect Active Duty servicemembers and members of the National Guard and Reserve from financial charges and judicial obligations that could incur due to their military service.

As most Americans know, cell phone companies charge early-termination fees if a user cancels an agreement for service with the carrier before their contract has expired. SCRA currently allows a servicemember who is ordered to move or deploy for longer than 90 days to cancel their cell phone contract without paying those fees. However, it does not explicitly protect servicemembers from having to pay early-termination fees for cable, satellite TV, or Internet access contracts.

H.R. 2409, as amended, which is sponsored by Congressman RYAN COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, would fix this inequity. I am grateful for his efforts in this bill to acknowledge that servicemembers would be given the same type of protections for cable, satellite TV, and Internet contracts as those already in place for cell phone devices.

The bill would also extend those protections to surviving spouses of servicemembers who are killed while on Active Duty.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman COSTELLO for bringing this bill forward, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2409, as amended, to allow certain servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet service contracts while deployed. This is an important part of modernizing the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act and helps it reflect the current lifestyle of servicemembers.

Internet and television access have become necessities in the modern world. The SCRA is key to protecting

the rights of servicemembers and allowing them to fulfill their service obligations.

I would like to thank the chairman for working with the minority to match this bill to the changes we are making under H.R. 5882, as amended, the Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act, which we will also be voting on today.

I would also like to thank the chairman for working with us on including National Guard and reservist servicemembers who are killed while on duty.

Lastly, I want to recognize Mr. KILMER and Mr. MCGOVERN for working with Mr. COSTELLO to bring this important bill forward.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO), author of the bill and former member of the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2409, bipartisan legislation I introduced with Congressman KILMER.

I want to thank Congressman KILMER for his work with me on this bill. I also want to recognize the very stellar leadership of Chairman ROE on the VA Committee and Ranking Member TAKANO, as well as all the VA staff seated behind me and those not seated behind me, but who work every day to make that a highly performing committee here in the House.

When our brave servicemembers are preparing to relocate or deploy because of Active Duty orders, they should not have to navigate costly and time-consuming cancellation fees and policies. Under current law, protections are granted to servicemembers with military orders for certain civil agreements, including rental leases or cell phone contracts; but they cannot terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed without incurring early-termination fees.

Our legislation, very simply, fixes this by updating the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to include pay TV and Internet service contracts. While some States already do provide relief for pay TV or Internet services, this legislation would update the act to enact a policy at the Federal level, ensuring servicemembers and their families receive uniform assistance no matter in which State they reside.

Mr. Speaker, I would again like to thank Chairman ROE for his support and his work to pass H.R. 2409. I would also like to thank Andrew and Erica in my office for their work on this important bill as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is our responsibility to help provide peace of mind to our servicemembers and their families when they prepare to deploy, so I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER), my good friend.

□ 1815

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this bill, which will allow our servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and internet contracts once they receive orders to relocate for more than 90 days.

Listen, we ask a lot of our military personnel and their families. I know that because my district is home to so many veterans and Active-Duty servicemembers. I met with these amazing, talented men and women, and they are so impressive. They step up and they sacrifice. They are constantly being asked to uproot themselves and their families across this country and all over the world, often on very short notice; and when their country calls, the members of our Armed Forces drop everything. They have our backs, and we should have their backs, too.

Deployed servicemembers and their families shouldn't have to worry about bills piling up at home when they are gone because they are locked into contracts for television and the internet. In the last few days at home with their kids and spouses, they shouldn't have to spend a second on hold or haggling with a customer service representative.

I am very proud to have worked across the aisle on this bill with Representative RYAN COSTELLO. Taking care of our military families is an issue that all Americans, regardless of party, can stand behind, and I want to express my gratitude to the chairman for his leadership on those issues and Ranking Member TAKANO and others on that committee.

Listen, this bill will provide a small measure of relief to our military members and to their families. It is the least we can do. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 2409, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I was thinking here, as we were listening to the testimony, when I went into the Army many, many years ago to go to Southeast Asia, there was no internet, there was no cable TV, and there were no cell phones, so it was pretty easy for me to leave then. There wasn't much to leave. But things have changed a lot since then. I encourage all Members to support H.R. 2409, as amended.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2409, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS-SPECIFIC EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW'S HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ACT

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2787) to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a pilot program instituting a clinical observation program for pre-med students preparing to attend medical school, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2787

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 “Veterans-Specific Education for Tomorrow’s Health Professionals Act” or the “Vet HP Act”.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PILOT PROGRAM FOR CLINICAL OBSERVATION BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.

It is the sense of Congress that the pilot program described in section 3(a) should be designed to—

(1) increase the awareness, knowledge, and empathy of future health professionals toward the health conditions common to veterans;

(2) increase the diversity of the recruitment pool of future physicians of the Department; and

(3) expand clinical observation opportunities for all students by encouraging students of all backgrounds to consider a career in the health professions.

SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PILOT PROGRAM FOR CLINICAL OBSERVATION BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program for a one-year period, beginning not later than August 15, 2021, to provide certain students described in subsection (d) a clinical observation experience at medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) **MEDICAL CENTER SELECTION.**—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program under this section at not fewer than five medical centers of the Department. In selecting such medical centers, the Secretary shall ensure regional diversity among such selected medical centers.

(c) **CLINICAL OBSERVATION SESSIONS.**—

(1) **FREQUENCY AND DURATION.**—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary shall—

(A) provide at least one and not more than three clinical observation sessions at each medical center selected during each calendar year;

(B) ensure that each clinical observation session—

(i) lasts between four and six months; and

(ii) to the extent practicable, begins and ends concurrently with one or more academic terms of an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)); and

(C) ensure that the clinical observation sessions provided at a medical center have minimal overlap.

(2) **SESSIONS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the pilot program consists of clinical observation sessions as follows:

(A) Each session shall allow for not fewer than five students nor greater than 15 students to participate in the session.

(B) Each session shall consist of not fewer than 20 observational hours nor greater than 40 observational hours.

(C) A majority of the observational hours shall be spent observing a health professional. The other observational hours shall be spent in a manner that ensures a robust, well rounded experience that exposes the students to a variety of aspects of medical care and health care administration.

(D) Each session shall provide a diverse clinical observation experience.

(d) **STUDENTS.**—

(1) **SELECTION.**—The Secretary shall select to participate in the pilot program under subsection (a) students who are—

(A) nationals of the United States;

(B) enrolled in an accredited program of study at an institution of higher education; and

(C) referred by their institution of higher education following an internal application process.

(2) **PRIORITY.**—In making such selection, the Secretary shall give priority to each of the following five categories of students:

(A) Students who, at the time of the completion of their secondary education, resided in a health professional shortage area (as defined in section 332 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254e)).

(B) First generation college students (as defined in section 402A(h)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a))).

(C) Students who have been referred by minority-serving institutions (as defined in section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a))).

(D) Veterans (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code).

(E) Students who indicate an intention to specialize in a health professional occupation identified by the Inspector General of the Department under section 7412 of title 38, United States Code, as having a staffing shortage.

(3) **ASSIGNMENT TO MEDICAL CENTERS.**—The Secretary shall assign students selected under paragraph (1) to medical centers selected under subsection (b) without regard for whether such medical centers have staffing shortages in any health professional occupation pursuant to section 7412 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) **OTHER MATTERS.**—In carrying out the pilot program under this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) establish a formal status to facilitate the access to medical centers of the Department by student observers participating in the pilot program;

(2) establish standardized legal, privacy, and ethical requirements for the student observers, including with respect to—

(A) ensuring that no student observer provides any care to patients while participating as an observer; and

(B) ensuring the suitability of a student to participate in the pilot program to ensure that the student poses no risk to patients;

(3) develop and implement a partnership strategy with minority-serving institutions to encourage referrals;

(4) create standardized procedures for student observers;

(5) create an online information page about the pilot program on the internet website of the Department;

(6) publish on the online information page created under paragraph (5) the locations of such centers, and other information on the pilot program, not later than 180 days before the date on which applications are required to be submitted by potential student observers;

(7) identify medical centers and specific health professionals participating in the pilot program; and

(8) notify the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the medical centers selected under

subsection (c) within 30 days of selection, to facilitate program awareness.

(f) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the pilot program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the results of the pilot program, including—

(1) the number and demographics of all applicants, those accepted to participate in the pilot program, and those who completed the pilot program; and

(2) if participating institutions of higher education choose to administer satisfaction surveys that assess the experience of those who completed the pilot program, the results of any such satisfaction surveys, provided at the discretion of the institution of higher education.

SEC. 4. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2787, as amended, the Veterans-Specific Education for Tomorrow’s Health Professionals Act. The bill would create a pilot program to provide undergraduate students with a clinical observation experience at the Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.

The pilot would give prospective providers a window into the healthcare profession that would help inform their educational paths and careers. It would also provide them an early introduction to both the VA healthcare system and the medical conditions common among our Nation’s veterans.

VA has a number of recruitment and retention challenges, one of which is an aging workforce that is increasingly retirement eligible. Given that, it is imperative that VA take every available opportunity to engage young clinicians and make a concerted effort to attract them to a career serving veterans within the VA healthcare system.

This bill is sponsored by the Congresswoman from Ohio, MARCY KAPTUR, and I appreciate her efforts. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2787, as amended, the Vet MD Act.

The Department of Veterans Affairs, like the Nation, is experiencing a shortage of healthcare providers. With shortages in areas like mental healthcare and medical administration, it can become increasingly difficult to maintain a facility's efficiency and quality. That is why it is increasingly important to promote medical education and employment within VA as soon in a student's educational career as is possible.

This bill allows VA to capture students as they complete their premedical undergraduate degrees by offering them the opportunity to shadow medical professionals in VA facilities. Not only does this create a familiarity with VA among the students, but allows VA to continue to do one of the things it does best: educate the Nation's future healthcare providers.

I appreciate the hard work of my colleague, Representative KAPTUR, and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Vet MD Act.

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

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), the author of this bill.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member TAKANO for his great support and for yielding me the time, and I thank Chairman ROE very much for moving this bill through his committee.

H.R. 2787, the Vet MD Act, also called the Veterans-Specific Education for Tomorrow's Health Professionals Act, I am honored to speak on its behalf this evening.

The Vet MD Act works to break down barriers and expand opportunities for healthcare professionals to get training to care for our veterans. The bill creates a 3-year pilot program for pre-health undergraduate students to gain clinical observation experience within at least five VA medical centers.

Health schools recommend or require clinical observation hours, but there is no formal process to apply for these hours. Opportunities to shadow are limited and are based on where you go to school or whom you know; and students who attend schools outside major cities, as well as those whose families lack connections to the medical community, find it harder and harder to shadow and are disadvantaged in medical school admissions. This places an unfair burden on otherwise qualified students who come from less affluent communities or rural areas.

Several years ago, two premedical undergraduate students highlighted to my team the struggles disadvantaged, minority, and other young people who lack personal connections face as they apply for medical school. So I thank Seamus Carragher and Andrew Frank for bringing this serious omission to our attention, and I thank Carrie

Swope, my legislative assistant, on this important issue, for her work throughout.

Through their own struggle, these students struggled to gain access to clinical observation, experience so critical in medical circles, and they realized an immense opportunity was missing. The bill prioritizes students in medically underserved areas; first-generation college students, of which I was one; students referred by minority-serving institutions; and, of course, veterans.

The Vet MD Act creates a pipeline for future physicians and medical professionals and prioritizes training for students who specialize in a health profession where there is a serious staffing shortage. This important step will help narrow the gap and ensure we are training pre-health students in careers that are in demand and necessary.

I can tell you, in every hospital system I represent, there is an unmet demand. Thousands and thousands of individuals are needed.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 45 seconds to the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, importantly, pre-health students in the pilot will gain a deeper understanding of veterans' specific health needs and experiences, which is critical for health professionals who treat veterans, many of whom have complex conditions, as the chair and ranking member know.

One of our top responsibilities as a Congress is to ensure that our veterans, those who have sacrificed so much for our country and for liberty's cause, receive high-quality healthcare from highly trained health professionals. This bill furthers that effort, and I am pleased it will get a vote this evening.

I thank my colleagues: Mr. TAKANO, for his diligent work on this bill; Ranking Member WALZ; and Chairman ROE, for bringing this bill to the floor so expeditiously. On behalf of our health professionals, our veterans, myself, and all the cosponsors, I can't thank you enough.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

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

Mr. Speaker, as I was listening to my friend from the State of Ohio, I was struck by just how the process of legislating in this body works, how ideas come from very real people seeking to solve problems through their Representative. And I watched this legislation move through committee, the gentlewoman graciously accepting the changes and approving the bill.

I know that my colleague from Tennessee, a doctor himself, cares so much about medical education. We worked together on expanding the number of medical residencies.

I am delighted this bill has come to the floor so expeditiously. Often, legis-

lation takes so much time to win its way through, but an idea that was very worthy moved through and, I think, in record time.

So, again, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 2787, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, I, too, came from rural America, and I, too, am a first-generation college graduate and had an opportunity to use the public education system to go to college and medical school. After that, then mentored and taught for over 25 years in medical school, so I had a chance to see young students, and I think this is a fantastic idea.

I thank my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for bringing this forward. To bring a young person in who has never had a chance to be in that sort of environment and expose them to this, you don't know what sort of light bulb you are going to turn on in their head to encourage them and mentor them. And many of them will become passionate about medicine, nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, PTSD treatment. I could go on and on. I think this is a great idea. I strongly encourage all Members to support H.R. 2787, as amended.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2787, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

INCLUDING ADDITIONAL PERIODS OF ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5538) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain additional periods of active duty service for purposes of suspending charges to veterans' entitlement to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs during periods of suspended participation in vocational rehabilitation programs.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5538

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

SECTION 1. INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ADDITIONAL PERIODS OF ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE FOR PURPOSES OF SUSPENSION OF CHARGES TO ENTITLEMENT DURING PERIODS OF SUSPENDED PARTICIPATION IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS.

Section 3105(e)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “or 12304” and inserting “12304, 12304a, or 12304b”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5538.

Under current law, if a member of the Guard or Reserve is called to Active Duty under certain orders while receiving training through the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program, the charges for that training are waived. However, those charges are not waived for members of the Guard or Reserve who are called up under orders regarding emergency response or augmentation of overseas combat forces. This creates a disparity.

H.R. 5538 would address that disparity and level the playing field by waiving training charges for all servicemembers, regardless of which Active-Duty orders they are serving under.

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

□ 1830

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5538, the Reserve Component Vocational Rehabilitation Parity Act.

This bill protects an overlooked provision related to our National Guard and Reserve servicemembers who are mobilized under 12304b authorities. This bill allows servicemembers to pause the clock on the 12-year limit to use vocational rehabilitation programs while mobilized on Active Duty orders. Currently, this is allowed for mostly mobilization authorities, but this particular authority was overlooked. Simply, the bill adds to 12304a and 12304b authorities to the 12304 provision already listed within the statute.

This is an important fix because of the increased use of 12304b authority by the Department of Defense over the past few years, and the increases planned for the future. As we move the

Reserve components from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve concept, it is critically important that we modernize our statutes to ensure benefits parity while servicemembers are in uniform. This is a step in the right direction.

With this bill, Congress has the opportunity to be proactive, instead of reactive, to the needs of our servicemembers.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PETERS for bringing this issue forward and identifying a fix. He is a reliable and critical advocate for our country's National Guard and Reserve servicemembers. I also thank Mr. BERGMAN for reaching across the aisle and joining Mr. PETERS in introducing this bill. And I thank the co-chairs of the House's National Guard and Reserve Components Caucus, Mr. WALZ and Mr. PALAZZO, for supporting the initiative. Lastly, I thank the six other members of our committee who were original cosponsors of the bill, including Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. BROWNLEY, and Ms. KUSTER.

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

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS), a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, the author of this bill, and my good friend.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. TAKANO for yielding. I appreciate his commitment to improving the lives of veterans, their families, and the communities. The Reserve Component Vocational Rehabilitation Parity Act, my bill before the House today, aims to continue investing in veterans, specifically those still fighting for our Nation.

Our veterans have served our country, and it is our duty to make sure they can access the resources that they have earned. Many guardsmen and reservists have realized that they didn't qualify for all their benefits after the Department of Defense began using their new authority created to call up Reserve components for involuntary service. This new authority unintentionally excluded these reservists.

Thankfully, Ranking Member WALZ and Mr. PALAZZO took the lead to fix several of these inconsistencies. We passed a few of these fixes in the Forever GI Bill last year. This week, we are also passing other bills to make sure benefits are properly extended.

One unresolved issue, though, was access to vocational rehabilitation. This VA program provides access to education and critical job training that helps servicemembers and veterans develop their career plan after service.

Vocational rehab helps veterans determine transferable skills that will lead to good jobs and what additional skills they need to fulfill their career goals.

Upon separation, a veteran must use his or her vocational rehab benefits

within 12 years. Any months or years spent deployed should not count against this time clock.

Currently, two reservists serving side by side in Active Duty may not have access to the same vocational rehab benefits just because of the authority under which they have been mobilized. Additionally, reservists involuntarily called up may be leaving their family or a civilian job without notice, compared to a reservist who volunteered.

In both cases, these guardsmen and reservists served honorably in missions to support combat zones. They have earned the same employment and education benefits as every other reservist throughout their service.

My bill, the Reserve Component Vocational Rehabilitation Parity Act, ensures that reservists and guardsmen have access to the full 12 years of vocational rehab benefits by pausing the clock during their service.

I am happy to have received the support of the National Guard Association of the United States and the Reserve Officers Association in this effort.

I urge Congress to pass this bill so that all of our veterans can access the education benefits they earned.

Mr. Speaker, I thank General Bergman, who joined me to introduce this bill, and seven of our committee colleagues who cosponsored the bill, as Mr. TAKANO said. I also thank Chairman ROE, a wonderful chairman; Ranking Member WALZ; and the Veterans' Affairs Committee staff for their steadfast work to support our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their strong support of the bill, and I urge its passage.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5538, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PETERS for bringing up this much-needed piece of legislation and correcting this inequity. It wasn't intended, but now this Congress has a chance, in a bipartisan way, to correct this.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 5538, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5538.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NAVY SEAL CHIEF PETTY OFFICER WILLIAM “BILL” MULDER (RET.) TRANSITION IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 5649) to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to amend the Social Security Act, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5649

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 “Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William ‘Bill’ Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvement Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.

Sec. 2. Table of contents.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENTS TO TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

Sec. 101. Access for the Secretaries of Labor and Veterans Affairs to the Federal directory of new hires.

Sec. 102. Pilot program for off-base transition training for veterans and spouses.

Sec. 103. Grants for provision of transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces after separation, retirement, or discharge.

Sec. 104. Study of community-based transition assistance programs for members of the Armed Forces after separation, retirement, or discharge.

Sec. 105. One-year independent assessment of the effectiveness of TAP.

Sec. 106. Longitudinal study on changes to TAP.

TITLE II—EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

Sec. 201. Improvements to assistance for certain flight training and other programs of education.

Sec. 202. Elimination of the period of eligibility for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 203. Educational assistance during extended school closures due to natural disasters.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) The term “TAP” means the Transition Assistance Program under sections 1142 and 1144 of title 10, United States Code.

(2) The term “military departments” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENTS TO TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

SEC. 101. ACCESS FOR THE SECRETARIES OF LABOR AND VETERANS AFFAIRS TO THE FEDERAL DIRECTORY OF NEW HIRES.

Section 453A(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653a(h)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) **VETERAN EMPLOYMENT.**—The Secretaries of Labor and of Veterans Affairs shall have access to information reported by employers pursuant to subsection (b) of this section for purposes of tracking employment of veterans.”.

SEC. 102. PILOT PROGRAM FOR OFF-BASE TRANSITION TRAINING FOR VETERANS AND SPOUSES.

(a) **EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM.**—Subsection (a) of section 301 of the Dignified Burial

and Other Veterans’ Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–260; 10 U.S.C. 1144 note) is amended—

(1) by striking “During the two-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the” and inserting “During the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William ‘Bill’ Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvement Act of 2018, the”; and

(2) by striking “to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing such program to eligible individuals at locations other than military installations”.

(b) **LOCATIONS.**—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “not less than three and not more than five States” and inserting “not less than 50 locations in States (as defined in section 101(20) of title 38, United States Code)”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “at least two” and inserting “at least 20”.

(c) **CONFORMING REPEAL.**—Subsection (f) of such section is repealed.

SEC. 103. GRANTS FOR PROVISION OF TRANSITION ASSISTANCE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AFTER SEPARATION, RETIREMENT, OR DISCHARGE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make grants to eligible organizations for the provision of transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who are separated, retired, or discharged from the Armed Forces, and spouses of such members.

(b) **USE OF FUNDS.**—The recipient of a grant under this section shall use the grant to provide to members of the Armed Forces and spouses described in subsection (a) resume assistance, interview training, job recruitment training, and related services leading directly to successful transition, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) **ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS.**—To be eligible for a grant under this section, an organization shall submit to the Secretary an application containing such information and assurances as the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, may require.

(d) **PRIORITY FOR HUBS OF SERVICES.**—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to an organization that provides multiple forms of services described in subsection (b).

(e) **AMOUNT OF GRANT.**—A grant under this section shall be in an amount that does not exceed 50 percent of the amount required by the organization to provide the services described in subsection (b).

(f) **DEADLINE.**—The Secretary shall carry out this section not later than six months after the effective date of this Act.

(g) **TERMINATION.**—The authority to provide a grant under this section shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date on which the Secretary implements the grant program under this section.

(h) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 to carry out this section.

SEC. 104. STUDY OF COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AFTER SEPARATION, RETIREMENT, OR DISCHARGE.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with State entities that serve members of the Armed Forces who are retired, separated, or discharged from the Armed Forces, shall enter into an agreement with an appropriate non-Federal entity to carry out a study to identify community-based programs—

(1) that provide transition assistance to such members; and

(2) operated by nonprofit entities.

(b) **TRANSMISSION TO MEMBERS.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall transmit the list of programs identified under this section to the Secretary of Defense so the Secretaries of the

military departments may provide information in the list to members of the Armed Forces who participate in TAP.

(c) **ONLINE PUBLICATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish the most recent version of the list of programs identified under this section on a public website of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 105. ONE-YEAR INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TAP.

(a) **INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the covered officials, shall enter into an agreement with an appropriate entity with experience in adult education to carry out a one-year independent assessment of TAP, including—

(1) the effectiveness of TAP for members of each military department during the entire military life cycle;

(2) the appropriateness of the TAP career readiness standards;

(3) a review of information that is provided to the Department of Veterans Affairs under TAP, including mental health data;

(4) whether TAP effectively addresses the challenges veterans face entering the civilian workforce and in translating experience and skills from military service to the job market;

(5) whether TAP effectively addresses the challenges faced by the families of veterans making the transition to civilian life;

(6) appropriate metrics regarding TAP outcomes for members of the Armed Forces one year after separation, retirement, or discharge from the Armed Forces;

(7) what the Secretary, in consultation with the covered officials, veterans service organizations, and organizations described in section 203(a) of this Act, determine to be successful outcomes for TAP;

(8) whether members of the Armed Forces achieve successful outcomes for TAP, as determined under paragraph (7);

(9) how the Secretary and the covered officials provide feedback to each other regarding such outcomes;

(10) recommendations for the Secretaries of the military departments regarding how to improve outcomes for members of the Armed Forces after separation, retirement, and discharge; and

(11) other topics the Secretary and the covered officials determine would aid members of the Armed Forces as they transition to civilian life.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the completion of the independent assessment under subsection (a), the Secretary and the covered officials, shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives—

(1) the findings and recommendations (including recommended legislation) of the independent assessment prepared by the entity described in subsection (a); and

(2) responses of the Secretary and the covered officials to the findings and recommendations described in paragraph (1).

(c) **COVERED OFFICIALS DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “covered officials” is comprised of—

(1) the Secretary of Defense;

(2) the Secretary of Labor;

(3) the Administrator of the Small Business Administration; and

(4) the Secretaries of the military departments.

SEC. 106. LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON CHANGES TO TAP.

(a) **STUDY.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Labor and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall conduct a five-year longitudinal study regarding TAP on three separate cohorts

of members of the Armed Forces who have separated from the Armed Forces, including—

(1) a cohort that has attended TAP counseling as implemented on the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) a cohort that attends TAP counseling after the Secretaries of Defense and Labor implement changes recommended in the report under section 205(b) of this Act; and

(3) a cohort that has not attended TAP counseling.

(b) **PROGRESS REPORTS.**—Not later than 90 days after the day that is one year after the date of the initiation of the study under subsection (a) and annually thereafter for the three subsequent years, the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives a progress report of activities under the study during the immediately preceding year.

(c) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the study under subsection (a), the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives a report of final findings and recommendations based on the study.

(d) **ELEMENTS.**—The final report under subsection (c) shall include information regarding the following:

(1) The percentage of each cohort that received unemployment benefits during the study.

(2) The numbers of months members of each cohort were employed during the study.

(3) Annual starting and ending salaries of members of each cohort who were employed during the study.

(4) How many members of each cohort enrolled in an institution of higher learning, as that term is defined in section 3452(f) of title 38, United States Code.

(5) The academic credit hours, degrees, and certificates obtained by members of each cohort during the study.

(6) The annual income of members of each cohort.

(7) The total household income of members of each cohort.

(8) How many members of each cohort own their principal residences.

(9) How many dependents that members of each cohort have.

(10) The percentage of each cohort that achieves a successful outcome for TAP, as determined under section 205(a)(6) of this Act.

(11) Other criteria the Secretaries and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration determine appropriate.

TITLE II—EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

SEC. 201. IMPROVEMENTS TO ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN FLIGHT TRAINING AND OTHER PROGRAMS OF EDUCATION.

(a) **USE OF ENTITLEMENT FOR PRIVATE PILOT'S LICENSES.**—Section 3034(d) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking the semicolon and inserting the following: “and is required for the course of education being pursued (including with respect to a dual major, concentration, or other element of a degree); and”;

(2) by striking paragraph (2); and

(3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

(b) **ACCELERATED PAYMENTS FOR FLIGHT TRAINING.**—Section 3313 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(k) **ACCELERATED PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN FLIGHT TRAINING.**—

“(1) **PAYMENTS.**—An individual enrolled in a program of education pursued at a vocational

school or institution of higher learning in which flight training is required to earn the degree being pursued (including with respect to a dual major, concentration, or other element of such a degree) may elect to receive accelerated payments of amounts for tuition and fees determined under subsection (c). The amount of each accelerated payment shall be an amount equal to twice the amount for tuition and fee so determined under such subsection, but the total amount of such payments may not exceed the total amount of tuition and fees for the program of education. The amount of monthly stipends shall be determined in accordance with such subsection (c) and may not be accelerated under this paragraph.

“(2) **EDUCATIONAL COUNSELING.**—An individual may make an election under paragraph (1) only if the individual receives educational counseling under section 3697A(a) of this title.

“(3) **CHARGE AGAINST ENTITLEMENT.**—The number of months of entitlement charged an individual for accelerated payments made pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be determined at the rate of two months for each month in which such an accelerated payment is made.”.

(c) **FLIGHT TRAINING AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.**—Subsection (c)(1)(A) of such section 3313 is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively;

(B) by striking “In the case of a program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning” and inserting “(I) Subject to subclause (II), in the case of a program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning not described in clause (ii)(II)(bb)”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(II) In determining the actual net cost for in-State tuition and fees pursuant to subclause (I), the Secretary may not pay for tuition and fees relating to flight training.”; and

(2) in clause (ii)—

(A) in subclause (I), by redesignating items (aa) and (bb) as subitems (AA) and (BB), respectively;

(B) in subclause (II), by redesignating items (aa) and (bb) as subitems (AA) and (BB), respectively;

(C) by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively;

(D) by striking “In the case of a program of education pursued at a non-public or foreign institution of higher learning” and inserting “(I) In the case of a program of education described in subclause (II)”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(II) A program of education described in this subclause is any of the following:

“(aa) A program of education pursued at a non-public or foreign institution of higher learning.

“(bb) A program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning in which flight training is required to earn the degree being pursued (including with respect to a dual major, concentration, or other element of such a degree).”.

(d) **CERTAIN PROGRAMS OF EDUCATION CARRIED OUT UNDER CONTRACT.**—Section 3313(c)(1)(A)(ii)(II) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (c)(2)(E), is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“(cc) A program of education pursued at a public institution of higher learning in which the public institution of higher learning enters into a contract or agreement with an entity (other than another public institution of higher learning) to provide such program of education or a portion of such program of education.”.

(e) **APPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided by paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section

shall apply with respect to a quarter, semester, or term, as applicable, commencing on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) **SPECIAL RULE FOR CURRENT STUDENTS.**—In the case of an individual who, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, is using educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, to pursue a course of education that includes a program of education described in item (bb) or (cc) of section 3313(c)(1)(A)(ii)(II) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsections (c) and (d), respectively, the amendment made by such subsection shall apply with respect to a quarter, semester, or term, as applicable, commencing on or after the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 202. ELIMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3103 of title 38, United States Code, is repealed.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 31 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 3103.

SEC. 203. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE DURING EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURES DUE TO NATURAL DISASTERS.

Section 3680 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) **SCHOOL CLOSURE DURING NATURAL DISASTERS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An individual described in paragraph (2) shall be entitled to a monthly stipend in the amount to which the individual would be entitled were the individual pursuing a course of education at an institution of higher education through resident training but for a school closure described under paragraph (4).

“(2) **INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED.**—An individual described in this paragraph is an individual pursuing a course of education at an institution of higher education using educational assistance under chapter 32, 33, 34, or 35 of this title, who—

“(A) is forced to discontinue pursuing such course at such institution by reason of a school closure described under paragraph (4); and

“(B) opts to—

“(i) pursue that course of education solely by distance learning; or

“(ii) pursue an alternative course of education solely by distance learning.

“(3) **DURATION.**—The duration of the monthly stipends payable to an individual under paragraph (1) shall be the shorter of the following:

“(A) The period of time necessary to complete the quarter, semester, term or academic period during which the school closure described in paragraph (4) occurs.

“(B) Four months.

“(4) **SCHOOL CLOSURE.**—A school closure described in this paragraph is the closure of an institution of higher education—

“(A) by reason of a natural disaster;

“(B) for a period of time that—

“(i) the institution confirms will last for four weeks or longer; or

“(ii) the institution describes as indefinite and that endures for a period of four weeks or longer; and

“(C) that the Secretary confirms is covered for purposes of this subsection.

“(5) **NATURAL DISASTER DEFINED.**—In this subsection, the term ‘natural disaster’ means a specific weather event or earth process, including a hurricane, tornado, wildfire or forest fire, earthquake, avalanche, mudslide, hailstorm, thunderstorm, lightning storm, freeze, blizzard, sinkhole, or other disastrous event that occurs as a result of such an event or process, that the President or the governor of a State declares a natural disaster.

“(6) **NO CHARGE TO ENTITLEMENT.**—No charge shall be made to the entitlement of any individual to educational assistance under chapter

32, 33, 34, or 35 of this title by reason of a payment under this subsection.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5649, as amended, the Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William “Bill” Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvements Act of 2018.

One of the most important things our government can do to help our Nation’s servicemembers is to ensure that their transition from military to civilian life is as smooth and seamless as possible. We all know that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and I know that so many of the problems that veterans encounter later in life could have been mitigated if they had a more supportive and successful transition.

I know that the goal of this bill, and of provisions that are aimed at improving the transition period in the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act, are to help servicemembers have as smooth a transition as possible to civilian life.

I will allow Congressman JODEY ARRINGTON of Texas, who is the sponsor of this bill, to go into the specifics of it in a moment. But before I do, I want to thank him, Congressman BETO O’ROURKE of Texas, and all of the members of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity for taking the time earlier this session to sit down with stakeholders and really examine the transition process from the very beginning and look at the need for improvements.

While this bill is a culmination of bipartisan review and work, it is only a step in the process to ensure a successful transition for all servicemembers. I know we will remain dedicated to making improvements to this process to reach this goal.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BRADY for helping to expedite the consideration of the bill today, and I thank Congressman ARRINGTON for his work.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2018.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On July 12, 2018, the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs ordered re-

ported H.R. 5649, as amended, the Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William “Bill” Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvement Act of 2018. The bill was referred to the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee with additional referrals to the House Ways and Means Committee and the House Armed Services Committee. Based on our previous consultation, we intend to request H.R. 5649, as amended, be scheduled for floor consideration.

To expedite floor consideration, I ask that you forego further consideration of H.R. 5649, as amended. This in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the House Ways and Means Committee represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on H.R. 5649, as amended, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

DAVID P. ROE, M.D.,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, July 17, 2018.

Hon. DAVID P. ROE, M.D.,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans’ Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROE: Thank you for your July 16, 2018 letter regarding H.R. 5649, the “Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William “Bill” Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvement Act of 2018” which was ordered favorably reported to the House on July 12, 2018.

As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 5649 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means, I agree to waive formal consideration of this bill so that it may move expeditiously to the floor. The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for such request.

Finally, would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 5649.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5649, as amended, the Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William “Bill” Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvements Act of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee chairman, Mr. ARRINGTON, and ranking member, Mr. O’ROURKE, for their bipartisan focus on this issue and the bipartisan way they have crafted this piece of legislation and have moved it forward.

This bill was generated out of feedback from our veteran service organi-

zation partners, rigorous oversight, and many, many hearings. It includes a number of curriculum changes, expansion of services, as well as first steps to making TAP a part of a larger transition effort.

It also includes Ms. BROWNLEY’s Reduce Unemployment for Veterans of All Ages Act, which eliminates the period of eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services. Currently, veterans have only 12 years after their military service to utilize vocational rehabilitation services. This removes that deadline and allows anyone who qualifies for vocational rehabilitation to access those services in perpetuity.

It also includes Mr. POE’s Veterans Education Disaster Act that provides continued educational assistance to students impacted by natural disasters. This is similar to the benefits that are provided for veterans whose schools suddenly close their doors, in order to ensure that veterans are not struggling while they seek to restart their education. This would also allow veterans to continue collecting their housing benefits even though their schools closed from natural disasters, and allow them to stop and restart their tuition benefits once their schools reopen.

We also pay for this bill by closing a loophole in flight school costs, while also making modifications to law that allows for the unique nature of flight schools.

All of these provisions have been crafted to fix issues we have seen in the field, and they will make life a little bit easier for our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Mr. O’ROURKE and Mr. ARRINGTON for these necessary improvements to the Transition Assistance Program. A testament to their work is the broad support they have received from committee members for this bill, including Ms. KUSTER, Mr. PETERS, and Ms. ESTY. I look forward to their future work on this as they continue to focus on and refine the program.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON), chairman of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee on the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, and my good friend.

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I can’t thank the chairman enough for the opportunity to serve with him, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. WENSTRUP. I am looking out and seeing colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have worked in a bipartisan way to solve problems so that we can better serve our veterans. I have to say, it has to be the most productive bipartisan committee in all of the United States Congress, and that is refreshing. And there is no worthier customer to serve than those who wore the uniform, those who sacrificed their today so that we could have our tomorrow.

I think it is notable to remind my colleagues of the work under his leadership to produce more than 70 pieces of reform legislation. Seventy bills that have passed the House of Representatives is no small task. More than 20 bills have become law of the land.

Again, I thank Mr. TAKANO for his leadership, Mr. WALZ, and my friends on the other side of the aisle. This is truly a bipartisan committee and effort altogether.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to support my bill, H.R. 5649. It is really not my bill; it is our bill. It is the bill of the committee, and it is the bill of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity. This is a bill that was amended as the Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William "Bill" Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvements Act of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, again, there is no greater honor for me than to serve the men and women who served our country with honor and distinction. I am pleased to be here today to debate the legislation I introduced, which I believe will significantly improve the lives of our servicemen and -women who are in transition from Active Duty to civilian life.

When our soldiers come home from war, it doesn't mean that the conflict necessarily is over for them. There is often a battle that continues to rage on inside of them. I think that is a big reason that we see, unfortunately, 20 veterans commit suicide every day in this country.

One of those veterans was my good friend and fellow Plainview Bulldog, Bill Mulder, after whom this bill was named. I am so proud that this is named after Bill, and I am grateful to Sydney and their family for allowing us to do so.

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Bill was a true American hero who served his country with honor and distinction. However, again, like many of our veterans, Bill returned home from service with an internal struggle, with scars that you couldn't see with the naked eye, and he was working through his transition to civilian life after 20 years as a combat Navy SEAL. That is tough. I can't imagine, to think about redefining your purpose and your mission after 20 years of fighting for our freedom in combat as a Navy SEAL.

Our country makes a tremendous investment, as Chairman ROE said, in preparing our citizens to be freedom fighters, to be part of the greatest fighting machine in the world, but we only invest a fraction of that helping soldiers in their transition back to civilian life.

I have often said, like the gentleman has stated, that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. And if we do a better job on the front end in their transition, and especially identifying the highest-risk individuals, I think that we can reduce the number

of veterans who struggle with unemployment, with homelessness, suicide, et cetera.

This bill is the result, again, of Mr. TAKANO, Mr. O'ROURKE, my ranking member, my friend and fellow Texan, and it will make the following improvements: It will improve in the sense that we will engage our Active Duty personnel earlier in the process. We will have a more comprehensive assessment, including mental health. We will customize support for them.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I yield the gentleman from Texas an additional 1 minute.

Mr. ARRINGTON. It will not just be a one-size-fits-all, I think, like we have seen in the past. We will also connect them back to community organizations and we will track and we will measure the success and the outcomes so we will know what is working, where we can continue to make those investments.

Again, I want to thank my friend and fellow Texan, Mr. O'ROURKE, for working with me on this package, and Chairman ROE, and Mr. WALZ for helping bring this forward and to a vote here on the House floor.

I am proud to say that this bill is fully offset. It is budget neutral, and I believe it will have a positive impact; in fact, I pray it will actually save lives of our American veterans.

I urge all Members to support H.R. 5649, as amended.

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

The work of this subcommittee is the work of great heart, and I appreciate the heartfelt work that the chairman, Mr. ARRINGTON, has put forward.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE), my good friend, the ranking member of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, a gentleman with great heart for veterans.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the vice-ranking member of the full committee, Mr. TAKANO, for this time to speak in favor of this bill.

As my colleague from Texas, and the chairman of the subcommittee pointed out, by the best estimate of the VA, which many believe is a conservative estimate, every single day in this country, 20 veterans will have taken their lives.

The purpose and the function and the dignity that they found as a member of the armed services, as a contributing member of their military unit, where the decisions that they made, the actions that they took, would literally save and determine the outcomes of the lives of their fellow servicemembers, to return that level of function and purpose to their lives when they come back to this country and reintegrate within our communities, that is the purpose of this legislation.

I want to thank my colleague, the chairman of the subcommittee, for his

diligent work on this, by convening stakeholders, veterans service organizations, veteran student service organizations, members of the VA, the Department of Labor, other colleagues from the committee to make sure that we got this right and that we help those servicemembers transition into a life that allows them to give to their full potential once back in their home community, once back in their country.

I want to make sure that we do everything we can to ensure the success of this legislation; that we follow the outcome assessments that are provided for in the legislation; that we meet the intention and the purpose that is described here, so that it is not a boxes checked at the end of a servicemember's career, but something that is pursued with thought, so that when that servicemember reintegrates, they are ready to hit the ground running.

Lastly, I want to thank the chairman of the full committee. Some will say that without Tennessee, there would be no Texas. Without Chairman ROE, there would be no H.R. 5649. The fact that you elevated this and that you spent so much of your time personally listening to these veteran service organizations and your colleagues on the committee, I think, helped to make it a much better bill than it would have been otherwise, and for that I am grateful.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP), my good friend, a former member of the committee, and chair of the Subcommittee on Health, also a member of the House Armed Services Committee and the Intelligence Committee.

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5649.

As a member of the Army Reserve who served in Iraq, I know how difficult the transition to civilian life can be after service for so many of our servicemembers. I still remember the eerie feeling of the quiet and serenity of home life after returning from the battlefield.

For those servicemembers who don't have a clear cut path upon their return to civilian life, there is often a struggle for what I like to refer to as post-necessary stress.

When you go from being completely necessary, part of a team, part of something big, and you come home and you don't have that same feeling, it takes its toll on you. It is hard for many servicemembers to actually settle back into civilian life when they get back. This is what this is about.

We can combat this problem by encouraging servicemembers to focus on transition earlier. Even when they first join the armed services, imagine if you were being recruited and you are talking to a recruiter about what you plan to do when you enter the military, and if they also said to you, and what do you plan to do afterwards? If we were plotting a course for your life when in uniform and after.

So this gives us a chance to modernize our curriculum for those going through the Transition Assistance Program to ensure that the information they have is timely and specific to the servicemember.

I think this legislation is an important first step to better equip servicemembers with the skills needed to successfully transition into civilian life.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation. I want to thank the committee, all the members on the committee, and the staff, for pushing this along and doing such a great job of that.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY), my good friend, and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5649, the Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William "Bill" Mulder Transition Improvement Act of 2018, a bill that will improve the transition process for servicemembers returning to civilian life to a life of purpose and meaning.

I want to thank my colleagues, the gentlemen from Texas, Mr. ARRINGTON and Mr. O'ROURKE, for introducing this important bill; and for including my own bill, the Job TOOLS for Veterans Act, as a provision within this larger legislation.

The Job TOOLS Act for veterans would ensure that veterans of all eras have access to transition assistance classes. The Transition Assistance Program, commonly known as TAP, was established to help current servicemembers transition to civilian life with job search and training information.

Prior to the establishment of TAP, very few servicemembers received any job training assistance during their transition at all.

We know that access to job training is essential to our mission of ensuring that all our servicemembers land on their feet when they return home from protecting our freedom. And given the transitions that veterans face over the years, especially in a changing economy, these job training programs are especially valuable throughout life; and that is why our bill would allow veterans, no matter when they served, to get access to this crucial assistance.

Additionally, it will allow veterans from any service era access to all TAP programs and will expand the TAP program to at least 50 locations across the United States.

The men and women who have admirably served our great Nation must know that we stand behind them when transitioning from military to civilian life, and that we stand behind them for life.

I want to thank Chairman ROE, Ranking Member WALZ, and Vice Ranking Member TAKANO for their work in getting this important bill to the floor today, for the outstanding bi-

partisan work of this committee, which I am so proud to serve on, and for our excellent staff.

I fully support H.R. 5649, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and to stand behind the veterans who will be assisted by this across the Nation.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD) a former, very active member on the Veterans Affairs Committee, and a good friend.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5649, the Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William Mulder Transition Improvement Act.

In my time on the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, my colleagues and I heard from countless constituents, including Active Duty and separated servicemembers about how ineffective the Federal Government's comprehensive Transition Assistance Program was at placing our veterans in long-term, stable employment.

Under the leadership of Chairman ROE and Subcommittee Chairman ARRINGTON, the subcommittee held a number of roundtables, hearings, meetings to receive feedback from all the stakeholders. We heard from DOD, the Department of Labor, Veterans Affairs, community providers and, of course, veterans themselves.

One section of this bill that I would like to highlight and thank Chairman ARRINGTON for including is section 203, which is bill language I introduced last year called the Veterans Armed for Success Act.

This section makes grants available to organizations that provide servicemembers transition assistance of their knowledge, skills, and abilities to private industry through such means as résumé building and interview training, and it is mirrored off an organization called Operation New Uniform that does just that in my district in Florida. This group has a 97 percent success rate in placing veterans in long-term employment.

As we learned through the information gathering process, a successful transition often relies on the community supporting our veterans and connecting with the resources that they need. We should help this and other similar organizations around the country use this model to help our veterans succeed.

I strongly commend Chairman ROE, Chairman ARRINGTON, Ranking Member WALZ, and all the members of the committee for their incredible work on this important piece of legislation. You all, along with the committee staff and other groups that worked so hard on this, should be proud of the real world impact that this legislation will have.

As I now serve as a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, I look forward to building on this important work with my col-

leagues to ensure our veterans are set up to succeed.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very special piece of legislation to me. I was once the ranking member of this very subcommittee, and I applaud the work of Ranking Member BETO O'ROURKE and Chairman ARRINGTON. This is a work of great heart, of great compassion, and we all know that we need to improve the transition from military service to civilian life for our servicemembers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5649, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1900

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I want to close by thanking Mr. ARRINGTON and Mr. O'ROURKE for bringing this great piece of legislation to the floor.

As I was listening to the debate and conversation, it sort of took me back a few years. I recall 53 years ago, when I was a college student, and I buried a very good friend of mine, who was my Scoutmaster, First Sergeant Thomas E. Thayer, who was killed in Vietnam. He won the Silver Star there. He had four children and a family at home. His life was worth, I think, \$10,000. I think that is what it was worth. I thought about what it did to his family and how little our country did for our Nation's heroes at that time, and I fast-forward to what we are doing now. We are making some things right.

I know Mr. ARRINGTON spoke very warmly of his friend, Chief Petty Officer Bill Mulder, a true American hero, who died.

I know when I separated from the military at the end of 1974, got back from Southeast Asia, separated from the Army, there was no transition. It was basically just out the front gate you went, and no one called, checked, whatever.

We are much better as a country, and we are much better now, Mr. Speaker, for what we are doing in this bill.

I agree with Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. ARRINGTON. I really believe if you put these young men and women back in a job, in school, which we just passed the Forever GI Bill from this committee and the President has signed it into law, all of these things, I think, will make a huge difference in the future not only of these young people who have served our Nation so honorably, but it will also help this country, this Nation.

I know, as a veteran and as a person who did not benefit from this, I certainly am more than happy to support this. I think this is a great piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank Mr. WALZ, Mr. TAKANO, and others who have helped push this through, and I again encourage all Members to support H.R. 5649, as amended.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5649, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GOLD STAR SPOUSES LEASING RELIEF ACT

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5882) to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the termination by a spouse of a lessee of certain leases when the lessee dies while in military service, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5882

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 “Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act”.

SEC. 2. TERMINATION OF LEASES OF PREMISES OF DECEASED SERVICEMEMBERS WHO DIE WHILE IN MILITARY SERVICE.

Section 305(a) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. 3955) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “BY LESSEE”;

(2) in the heading for paragraph (1), by striking “IN GENERAL” and inserting “TERMINATION BY LESSEE”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) DEATH OF LESSEE.—The spouse of the lessee on a lease described in subsection (b)(1) may terminate the lease during the one-year period beginning on the date of the death of the lessee, if the lessee dies while in military service or while performing full-time National Guard duty, active Guard and Reserve duty, or inactive-duty training (as such terms are defined in section 101(d) of title 10, United States Code).”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5882, as amended, the Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act.

The death of a servicemember can have a profound impact on their loved

ones. Our government should take every measure necessary to help family members through such a time of need.

In recognition of that, the Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, the SCRA, to allow a spouse of a servicemember who has died due to military service to break their residential lease without penalty within 1 year of the servicemember's death.

Mr. Speaker, paying fees for breaking a lease should be the last thing on someone's mind when they are confronting life without their spouse.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the sponsor of this bill, Congresswoman CHERI BUSTOS of Illinois, for her commonsense solution to this problem. I also want to thank Ranking Member WALZ and his staff for their suggestion to improve the bill by including in it a provision that would extend protection to surviving spouses of members of the National Guard and Reserve whose death occurred while on Active-Duty orders.

We should recognize the service of all servicemembers on Active-Duty orders, and I am glad the amended version of this bill includes that provision.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5882, as amended, the Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to first start by thanking the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS) for drafting this bill. It would allow the spouse of a servicemember to terminate their lease after the death of the servicemember.

Oftentimes, servicemembers and their families are required to move far away from home due to the needs of the service and where the servicemember is stationed. In the difficult time after the passing of a servicemember, spouses should not be stuck in a lease far away from their home and support network. This may seem like a small detail, but it is something that can make life just a little bit easier in a very trying time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the chairman for working with us on including National Guard and Reserve servicemembers who are killed while on duty.

As we move the Reserve components from a Strategic Reserve to an Operational Reserve concept, we are seeing too many deaths of National Guardsmen and -women and reservists while they are in uniform. It is critically important that we modernize our statutes to ensure benefits parity while servicemembers are in uniform.

Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS), for working on this issue and Mr. WENSTRUP for joining her in introducing the bill. I would also like to thank our fellow committee members, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. BROWNLEY,

and Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, for cosponsoring this bill and raising the profile of this issue.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP). He spoke a moment ago. He has previously served as chair of the Health Subcommittee of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act, legislation that I am proud to have introduced alongside my colleague Congresswoman BUSTOS, and I thank her for bringing this situation to my attention so that we could bring this forward.

Part of our Nation's commitment to our men and women in uniform is a commitment to their families, especially if they endure the loss of life in the line of duty. As Gold Star families grieve, they should have the freedom to relocate to fit their family's needs. Sadly, that is all too often not the case.

Cindy Southern, a native of Portsmouth, Ohio, lost her husband while he was serving in the Navy overseas during the first Desert Storm war. As she grieved, all she wanted to do was move home, but she had signed a 1-year lease on a home in North Carolina. Her landlords refused to waive her lease without massive termination fees.

Cindy has suffered enough. Others have as well. This legislation would protect Gold Star families by ensuring they are not trapped in a jointly held residential lease after the death of a servicemember. They have grieved enough.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS), my good friend and the author of this bill.

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act. This bipartisan bill would support the widows and widowers of our fallen heroes by allowing them to terminate residential leases without penalty in the wake of a servicemember's death.

This issue first came to my attention when I met a Gold Star spouse, Kylie Riney of Farmington, Illinois, which is in a central part of the congressional district that I serve.

Kylie's life was forever changed on October 19, 2016, when her husband, Sergeant Douglas Riney, tragically died defending our freedom in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Kylie and her two young children, James and Elea, were living in Texas at the time. This is their beautiful family before tragedy hit. They had moved there when Sergeant Riney was

assigned to Fort Hood before deploying in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

After her husband's death, Kylie chose to be back in Illinois with her family, surrounded by those whom she loves and love her so they could mourn together this inconceivable loss. But in the wake of this tragedy, their landlord refused to allow Kylie to terminate the lease that she and her husband had signed—I mean, it is just hard to even get those words out—refused to allow them to get out of their lease.

The families of our fallen heroes have already sacrificed far too much, and we should do everything in our power to ensure grieving spouses receive the support that they need. For this reason, I was proud to introduce this commonsense, bipartisan bill, the Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, Congressman BRAD WENSTRUP, who is also an Army Reserve officer and a physician, who helped introduce this with me. I would also like to thank Chairman ROE and Ranking Member TIM WALZ for their work in bringing this to the floor.

Currently, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act protects servicemembers from lease termination fees when they deploy or receive a permanent change of station. Our legislation narrowly extends that law's residential leasing protections to the surviving spouses of servicemembers who are killed while serving their country.

Ranking Member WALZ helped ensure the bill would protect all these families, including those who lose a member of the National Guard or Reserves. He has been a tireless advocate for the National Guard in Congress, and it is a pleasure to be able to work with him.

I can hardly think of anything worse than taking advantage of a grieving widow or widower whose spouse made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this bill to ensure this does not happen again.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5882, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois for introducing this important piece of legislation. I am dumbfounded that we have landlords who would not recognize the situation of a fallen soldier, but this law is necessary, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I, too, associate my comments with Mr. TAKANO.

I grew up in a military town, Clarks-ville, Tennessee, where, during the

Vietnam war, I saw all too many families broken apart, had to move. I find it almost unimaginable that a landlord would insist that somebody not separate, not do this when they have lost a spouse.

That beautiful family that she showed, their lives are changed forever, and the last thing that young widow needed to worry about was that. She needed to take care of those children, to explain why their father was not coming home or, in another case, their mother might not be coming home.

Mr. Speaker, I can't think of any bill that deserves the support more than this one does, and I encourage all Members to support H.R. 5882, as amended.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GAETZ). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5882, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VA HOSPITALS ESTABLISHING LEADERSHIP PERFORMANCE ACT

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5864) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish qualifications for the human resources positions within the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5864

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 "VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance Act".

SEC. 2. QUALIFICATIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES POSITIONS WITHIN THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) establish qualifications for each human resources position within the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(2) establish standardized performance metrics for each such position; and

(3) submit to Congress a report containing the qualifications and standardized performance metrics established under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the establishment of the qualifications and performance metrics under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate a report containing—

(1) a description of the implementation of such qualifications and performance metrics; and

(2) an assessment of the quality of such qualifications and performance metrics.

SEC. 3. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

□ 1915

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5864, the VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance Act, or the VA HELP Act.

The significant recruitment and retention challenges facing the VA healthcare system are nothing new. One of my priorities as chairman has been to help the VA address those challenges and attract high-quality clinicians and support staff to VA medical facilities. To that end, I have worked to see two major pieces of legislation—the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act, and the VA Mission Act—signed into law this Congress include extensive improvements to the VA's hiring authorities.

However, those improvements will not be nearly as effective as they could be if the HR professionals that are administering them aren't operating at the top of their game. Unfortunately, the committee has found several instances where it appeared that some HR staff working in VA medical facilities had substandard education and professional backgrounds, including one HR director at a VA medical center who lacked both a college degree and relevant work experience.

To prevent that, the VA HELP Act would require the VA to establish qualification standards and standardized performance metrics for HR within the VHA. To ensure transparency and to aid the committee in our ongoing oversight efforts, it would also require the VA to provide Congress with a copy of those qualification standards and performance metrics, as well as require the Government Accountability Office to conduct an assessment of them.

I wholeheartedly believe that this bill will result in better staffed VA medical facilities, and, therefore, a

more accessible VA healthcare system for our Nation's heroes.

I am grateful to the sponsor of the VA HELP Act, my colleague and friend, Congressman MIKE BOST of Illinois. MIKE is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, a tireless advocate for veterans and their families, and, I might add, a veteran himself.

Mr. Speaker, I thank him for his leadership on this bill. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5864, as amended, the VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance Act, or VA HELP Act.

Due to nationwide shortages, nuanced certification and licensing requirements, and complex position descriptions, human resource professionals working in the healthcare industry must possess a unique set of skills and qualifications.

Human resource professionals working within the VA must further develop their skills while learning how to leverage the many hiring initiatives, budgetary concerns, and Federal resources in a way that can compete with the private sector's financial incentives.

The VA HELP Act is an effort to assist the VA in finding the unique talent it needs to fill these health-specific human resource officers by requiring the VA to establish qualifications and standardized performance metrics for each human resource position within VHA.

By further defining the human resource positions within VHA and standardizing performance metrics, the VA will be able to more easily to attract, access, and retain quality human resource officers.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), the chairman of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, who also is a Marine veteran who has drunk from the Devil Dog fountain at Belleau Wood.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman. As all of us here know today, the mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs is the care for those who have borne the battle.

When our heroes transition from the military, they deserve to have access to quality healthcare and services. Unfortunately, the VA continues to fall short on the promises, due, in part, to failures in human resource offices. This issue hit close to home for me after the VA National Center for Patient Safety surveyed the Marion VA Medical Center in my district.

The Marion survey showed a decline in key factors, such as communication between management and staff, and reporting problems to management. The Veterans Affairs' Subcommittee on

Oversight and Investigations staff then visited Marion in order to get a firsthand look at the issues at the facility.

During that site visit, multiple employees raised concerns about poor management, poor communication, distrust between leadership and management, and the lack of accountability. Despite several efforts to encourage the VA headquarters leadership to address these problems, limited actions have been taken, and my office continues to receive complaints.

The common thread throughout has been the issue in the human resource department. HR management is a critical part of delivering quality healthcare. HR is responsible for recruiting and retaining highly qualified professionals, and the current status quo within the VHA's HR offices cannot continue.

That is why I introduced H.R. 5854, the VA HELP Act, with Representative SINEMA. This bipartisan, straightforward legislation instructs the VA Secretary to establish qualifications for HR positions within the VHA, and to set performance metrics for these positions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members of the House to support H.R. 5864 to ensure that our Nation's veterans are being provided the best possible care from VA employees. I thank the chairman of the committee, Chairman ROE, and Ranking Member TAKANO for supporting this.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5864, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 5864, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5864, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

VETERANS SERVING VETERANS ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5938) to amend the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a vacancy and recruitment database to facilitate the recruitment of certain members of the Armed

Forces to satisfy the occupational needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish and implement a training and certification program for intermediate care technicians in that Department, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5938

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 "Veterans Serving Veterans Act of 2018".

SEC. 2. RECRUITMENT DATABASE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 208 of the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act (Public Law 115-46; 38 U.S.C. 701 note) is amended as follows:

(1) In subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "a single database" and inserting "and maintain a single searchable database (to be known as the 'Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs Recruitment Database')";

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking "and" and inserting a semicolon;

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting "and"; and

(D) by adding after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

"(3) with respect to each vacant position under paragraphs (1) and (2)—

"(A) the military occupational specialty or skill that corresponds to the position, as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense; and

"(B) each qualified member of the Armed Forces who may be recruited to fill the position before such qualified member of the Armed Forces has been discharged and released from active duty."

(2) By redesignating subsections (b), (c), and (d) as subsections (f), (g), and (h), respectively.

(3) By inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsections:

"(b) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—Subject to subsection (c), the database established under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to each qualified member of the Armed Forces, the following information:

"(1) The name and contact information of the qualified member of the Armed Forces.

"(2) The date on which the qualified member of the Armed Forces is expected to be discharged and released from active duty.

"(3) Each military occupational specialty currently or previously assigned to the qualified member of the Armed Forces.

"(c) AVAILABILITY.—Information in the database shall be available to offices, officials, and employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs to the extent the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines appropriate.

"(d) EXPEDITED HIRING PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall hire qualified members of the Armed Forces who apply for vacant positions listed in the database established under subsection (a) without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code.

"(e) RELOCATION BONUS.—The Secretary may authorize a relocation bonus, in an amount determined appropriate by the Secretary and subject to the same limitations as in the case of the authority provided under section 5753 of title 5, to any qualified member of the Armed Forces who has accepted a position listed in the database established under subsection (a)."

(4) In subsection (g)(1), as redesignated in paragraph (2), by striking "subsection (b)" and inserting "subsection (g)".

(5) In subsection (h), as redesignated in paragraph (2), by striking “of this Act” and inserting “of the Veterans Serving Veterans Act of 2018, and annually thereafter”.

(6) By adding after subsection (h), as redesignated in paragraph (2), the following new subsection:

“(i) **QUALIFIED MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘qualified member of the Armed Forces’ means a member of the Armed Forces—

“(1) described in section 1142(a) of title 10;

“(2) who elects to be listed in the database established under subsection (a); and

“(3) who has been determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, to have a military occupational specialty that corresponds to a vacant position described in subsection (a).”.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a plan to implement, including a timeline, section 208 of the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act (Public Law 115-46; 38 U.S.C. 701 note), as amended by this section.

SEC. 3. INTERMEDIATE CARE TECHNICIAN TRAINING PROGRAM.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement a program to train and certify covered veterans to work as intermediate care technicians in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) **LOCATIONS.**—

(1) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary shall establish centers at medical facilities of the Department selected by the Secretary for the purposes of carrying out the program under subsection (a).

(2) **SELECTION OF MEDICAL FACILITIES.**—In selecting a medical facility of the Department under this subsection to serve as a center, the Secretary shall consider—

(A) the experience and success of the facility in training intermediate care technicians; and

(B) the availability of resources of the facility to train intermediate care technicians.

(c) **COVERED VETERAN DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “covered veteran” means a veteran whom the Secretary determines served as a basic health care technician while serving in the Armed Forces.

SEC. 4. NO AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out section 208 of the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act (Public Law 115-46; 38 U.S.C. 701 note), as amended by section 2 of this Act, or to carry out section 3 of this Act. Such sections shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated for such purpose.

SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5938, as amended, the Veterans Serving Veterans Act. This bill is sponsored by my friend and fellow committee member, the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN).

Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful for her hard work and leadership on this bill on behalf of our Nation’s veterans in Puerto Rico and across the country. The Veterans Serving Veterans Act contains two provisions that would help alleviate staffing shortages at the Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities and create employment opportunities for servicemembers separating from the Armed Forces.

First, it would expand VA’s recruiting database to include information about soon-to-be separated servicemembers whose military training and experience match open positions within the VA healthcare system. It is common sense.

Second, it would expand an existing pilot program that recruits former medics to serve as intermediate care technicians in VA medical facilities. We all know that, all other things being equal, veterans prefer being seen and treated by their peers. This bill would create a pathway for that to happen more often, while addressing the serious recruitment issues that continue to hamper VA medical facilities coast to coast.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5938, as amended, the Veterans Serving Veterans Act of 2018.

Veterans exit the military with the highest quality of education and experience in their respective fields. We, along with the private sector, have worked diligently to ensure servicemembers are able to translate their skills to the private industry. However, this bill takes our efforts a step further by allowing the VA to create a searchable vacancy and recruitment database containing each VA vacancy and the corresponding military occupation code or skill that corresponds to the positions.

The database will also allow interested servicemembers to opt in to be included in the database, so that the VA may begin recruiting transitioning servicemembers to fill vacant positions before their discharges are complete.

In addition to the creation of the database, the bill also allows the Secretary to create a pilot program to train servicemembers who served as basic healthcare technicians while

serving in the Armed Forces to be trained as intermediate care technicians at the VHA.

By creating a pipeline from service to bedside, the VA can better treat the 9 million veterans who depend on its services.

I appreciate the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) for her hard work on this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, before I yield to our next speaker, I want to tell Members about this young woman. She represents the island of Puerto Rico, and before one of the hurricanes hit, I called her on the phone just moments before the hurricane. I was amazed that I even got through.

Following that, we led a group. I came to visit the hospital and the island of Puerto Rico, and the passion that she shows for the people she represents, and the passion she shows for veterans, is second to none.

I wanted to pass that along. I saw something in this young woman down there that I had not seen before I visited her beautiful island.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN), a member of the Veterans Affairs’ Committee.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROE for, first of all, visiting the island. This is the first time ever the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs ever visited Puerto Rico. I thank the gentleman for that, for his leadership, and for his commitment, and the ranking member’s commitment, during the last months.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of my bill, H.R. 5938, the Veterans Serving Veterans Act of 2018. This bill seeks to alleviate chronic staffing shortages that currently affect the Department of Veterans Affairs, which hinders their ability to serve our veterans in an effective and timely manner.

This issue never fails to come up during those meetings with veterans residing in Puerto Rico and is often discussed by my colleagues here in the House. H.R. 5938 seeks a remedial option to this issue by doing two things.

First, amending section 208 of the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act of 2017 to include the military occupational specialties of soon-to-be discharged servicemembers that correspond to vacant positions at the VA in the recruiting database, as well as servicemembers’ contact information and the date of discharge. Inclusion in the database is completely optional for those servicemembers. If included, they will potentially be matched for vacant positions at the VA that correspond with the skills they acquired with the Department of Defense.

Second, the bill will also require the VA to implement a program to train

and certify former Department of Defense healthcare technicians as intermediate care technicians, ICTs, to address the large demand for healthcare providers at the Veterans Health Administration.

These very skilled technicians trained by the DOD have difficulty gaining employment in their field after separating from the Armed Forces due to the lack of a certification. At the same time, the VHA has a significant shortage of providers. The ICT program has a high satisfaction rate and helps fill this void.

Servicemembers are a remarkable asset upon transitioning from the Department of Defense. We should do everything we can do to foster this transition and facilitate this opportunity to our men and women in uniform to serve our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I need to again thank Chairman ROE for his leadership. For me, it is an honor to serve on this committee with a gentleman who has this commitment and who works in a bipartisan manner with Ranking Member WALZ and Congressman TAKANO. I thank the gentlemen for their support. It is an honor to improve so many bills like this with these amendments.

Their leadership and assistance in moving this bill forward make us all proud, so I urge all my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

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Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5938, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 5938, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5938, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CREATION OF ON-SITE TREATMENT SYSTEMS AFFORDING VETERANS IMPROVEMENTS AND NUMEROUS GENERAL SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS ACT

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5974) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5974

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 “Department of Veterans Affairs Creation of On-Site Treatment Systems Affording Veterans Improvements and Numerous General Safety Enhancements Act” or the “VA COST SAVINGS Enhancements Act”.

SEC. 2. USE OF ON-SITE REGULATED MEDICAL WASTE TREATMENT SYSTEMS AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF FACILITIES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall identify Department of Veterans Affairs facilities that would benefit from cost savings associated with the use of an on-site regulated medical waste treatment system over a five-year period.

(b) REGULATED MEDICAL WASTE COST ANALYSIS MODEL.—For purposes of carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall develop a uniform regulated medical waste cost analysis model to be used to determine the cost savings associated with the use of an on-site regulated medical waste treatment system at Department facilities. Such model shall be designed to calculate savings based on—

(1) the cost of treating regulated medical waste at an off-site location under a contract with a non-Department entity, compared to

(2) the cost of treating regulated medical waste on-site, based on the equipment specification of treatment system manufacturers, with capital costs amortized over a ten-year period.

(c) INSTALLATION.—At each Department facility identified under subsection (a), the Secretary shall secure, install, and operate an on-site regulated medical waste treatment system.

(d) USE OF BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENT.—Any medical waste treatment system purchased pursuant to this section shall be purchased under the blanket purchase agreement known as the “VHA Regulated Medical Waste On-Site Treatment Equipment Systems Blanket Purchase Agreement” or any successor, contract, agreement, or other arrangement.

(e) REGULATED MEDICAL WASTE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “regulated medical waste” has the meaning given such term under section 173.134(a)(5) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, concerning regulated medical waste and infectious substances, or any successor regulation, except that, in the case of an applicable State law that is more expansive, the definition in the State law shall apply.

SEC. 3. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5974, as amended, the Department of Veterans Affairs Creation of On-Site Treatment Systems Affording Veterans Improvements and Numerous General Safety Enhancements Act, or, perhaps the most creative naming of a bill since I have been in Congress, the VA COST SAVINGS Enhancements Act.

This bill will require VA to identify facilities that could benefit from onsite medical waste management and, in those facilities, install and operate onsite medical waste treatment capabilities.

The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention both consider onsite medical waste management to be a best practice. However, only a relatively small percentage of VA medical facilities have installed onsite sterilization equipment to date.

By considering which VA medical facilities could find value in onsite medical waste management and making a deliberate effort to transition those facilities away from off-site medical waste management arrangements, VA could achieve considerable savings of taxpayer dollars that could, in turn, be used to fund other VA initiatives. It would also result in more VA facilities utilizing a waste disposal method that is both safer and more environmentally friendly.

This bill is sponsored by Congressman JEFF DENHAM from California, and I thank him for bringing this issue to the committee's attention. I applaud the gentleman for his creativity in coming up with an acronym for a bill of this size.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5974, as amended, the Department of Veterans Affairs Creation of On-Site Treatment Systems Affording Veterans Improvements and Numerous General Safety Enhancements Act, otherwise known as the VA COST SAVINGS Enhancements Act.

Mr. Speaker, the current funding issues currently surrounding VA are evidence of the need for creative cost savings measures. I must thank Representative DENHAM in identifying and championing one such creative solution.

The VA COST SAVINGS Enhancements Act simply asks VHA to review its current medical waste disposal system and determine whether hosting this disposal onsite would result in cost savings over the next 5 years. If so, then the facility is required to implement onsite disposal.

Onsite medical waste disposal is safer and far more efficient in most cases, and this bill would simply require VHA to ensure they are achieving the safest and most cost-effective method of medical waste disposal.

Again, I thank Representative DENHAM for his work on the bill, and I

urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the measure.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM), who is my friend and a fellow veteran.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and ranking member for their support of H.R. 5974, the VA COST SAVINGS Enhancements Act.

This bipartisan bill improves care for our veterans. It also ensures that the VA is using the latest cost-saving technology. It directs the VA to install on-site medical waste treatment systems in facilities where this will result in a cost savings within 5 years. System-wide, this will save the VA millions of dollars each year and directly improve safety and healthcare for our veterans.

In addition to the significant cost savings, this technology is safer and increases crisis readiness. Safety is paramount when caring for our vets, and treating waste onsite prevents the spread of dangerous infections. Both the CDC and the World Health Organization recommend this technology, and this policy brings the VA in line with recommended practices for private medicine.

Likewise, in the event of an earthquake or a wildfire, which we saw in California, transportation infrastructure can be compromised and prevent hazardous waste from being trucked to a disposal site or through a city. We need to make sure that this is handled onsite. In a disaster scenario like this, treating waste is critical to preventing an outbreak and keeping the facility actually up and running without huge backloads of the waste.

Our veterans deserve the highest quality of care. This technology improves crisis-readiness and is safer, more efficient, more cost effective, and more environmentally friendly than traditional medical waste disposal. Installing these machines will immediately begin saving the VA millions of dollars per year and directly improve care for our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5974.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I ask my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5974, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

At this time, I want to thank both minority and majority staffs for the hard work they have done on these eight bills. We once again have shown that we can work in a bipartisan way and close many loopholes that no one ever attempted in previous law or just common sense, like when a spouse has lost their loved one to be free to move along with a cable bill or a lease and other issues that we have dealt with here today.

I want to thank Mr. TAKANO, Mr. WALZ, the staff on the minority side, and the staff on the majority side for the hard work that they have done on all of these bills. The committee will continue to move forward with other bills later in the year.

Mr. Speaker, I once again encourage all Members to support H.R. 5974, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5974, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will recognize Members for Special Order speeches without prejudice to the possible resumption of legislative business.

A BETTER DEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity to address the House.

As I often do in these evenings in the Special Order hour, I try to first lay out what it is: what is the purpose, what is the goal, and what is the value in what we are trying to accomplish.

I find myself always harkening back to a quote that I saw many years ago, and then more recently found etched into the marble at the FDR Memorial here in Washington, D.C. It comes from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and he talked about what he was trying to accomplish and what he thought America ought to accomplish during the Great Depression. His words are equally important during the Great Recession and the years thereafter.

He said: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

It is kind of what we are all about as Democrats, and that is why we found the tax cut, the Republican tax cut which no Democrat voted for last December, so profoundly troubling. That tax cut, on top of the 2001 and the 2003 Republican tax cuts, added \$2 trillion to the wealth of the top 1 percent of Americans.

Let me say that once again. FDR was quite clear in his test of policy. He said: "The test of our progress is not

whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

The 2001 and the 2003 Republican tax cuts, together with the December 2017 Republican tax cuts, which no Democrat in the House of Representatives voted for, added \$2 trillion to the wealth of the top 1 percent of Americans.

I suppose that would be okay if the 99 percent had somehow seen their wealth grow. It didn't happen. In fact, what we have seen in the last decade since the Great Recession is that the great middle class of America and the poor have seen no real income growth.

In the last couple of years, yes, there has been a wage increase, about 2 percent, totally consumed by inflation, which was slightly more than 2 percent—no real income growth.

So what is happening here is that we Democrats are proposing a better deal for Americans. Yes, those words are similar to what FDR used. But we are proposing a better deal for Americans, not one that makes the rich richer, although that would be fine if the rest of America could also become richer.

But that is going to take a change in public policy, and that is what we are proposing to do, because our public policy going forward is going to be about a better deal for the American people.

We are proposing, as we go into this election year, that we push aside the Republican proposal, which is essentially a better deal for the super-rich, and we want to bring about a better deal for the people.

Here are the three major elements of that deal:

We want to lower our healthcare costs and prescription drugs for the American people. We can do this. Unfortunately, our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle are going in exactly the other direction. As they have ripped the guts out of the Affordable Care Act, we have seen the cost of healthcare in America skyrocket.

□ 1945

We have seen the cost of drugs skyrocket. We want to end that. One of the things we most definitely want to end is what the Republicans are now proposing and that is that we go back in America to the bad old days when, if you had a preexisting condition, you could not get healthcare; or, you would have to pay a small fortune just to get an insurance policy.

No, we don't want that, but that is what our Republican colleagues are trying to give us all across this Nation—a return to the insurance discrimination where, if you have a preexisting condition, you cannot get healthcare at an affordable price and quite probably couldn't get it at all.

Issue one, the cost of drugs. The 2003 improvement to Medicare part D provided prescription drugs at a reduced cost for seniors. All good. A clause was written into that which prohibited the

Federal Government from negotiating drug prices for the tens of millions of Americans on Medicare.

So we have seen the cost of prescription drugs soar. We have seen the stories about a drug that was acquired by some rip-off person who then took the cost of that drug from a few dollars per pill to several hundred or several thousand dollars per pill.

So that is point one. I am going to go down to point three, because I am going to spend time on point two.

What we want to do is clean up the corruption of politics in Washington and across this Nation. Just recently, the Treasury Department said that the NRA didn't have to reveal who its contributors were to its dark money program. Similarly, no other dark money PAC across the State had to reveal who their contributors were.

Citizens United opened the floodgates to hidden money, secret money. Millions upon millions of dollars pour into campaigns to influence the effect of those campaigns. So we want to deal with Citizens United. We want to deal with this problem of corruption in our political system. There are many ways we can do it, but until we can deal with it, we are going to continue to see more and more legislation that benefits the rich at the expense of the working men and women of America.

Now, let me go to this second one here. We want to increase and grow our economy and jobs through an infrastructure program rebuilding America. That will be the central focus of what I want to spend this evening on.

So, as we talk a better deal for the American people, we will be talking about healthcare issues, we will be talking about corruption and ending the dark money. We will also talk about rebuilding the infrastructure for America and creating jobs.

As we go into this, why is it important? Why is infrastructure important?

I suspect many of you remember just more than a year ago that the greatest waterfall in all the world was created at the Oroville Dam in California, just a few miles upstream from my district on the Feather River. Yes, an infrastructure failure. The Oroville Dam spillway was about to give way, just to the side of this, creating a 30-foot wall of water, because the main spillway had collapsed.

I suppose if you are interested in waterfalls, this was quite an event. But it was dangerous. Two hundred thousand of my constituents had to immediately evacuate in the cities of Marysville, Yuba City, and Live Oak, and other small communities in that area, for fear that that infrastructure project would fail. Well, it did, but not totally.

For the folks in Seattle, Washington, or anybody who was traveling on Interstate 5 from Washington State to British Columbia, it turned out it was a tough day to get there. This is the Interstate 5 bridge. Well, I suppose if you had pontoons or maybe water wings, you could stay on Interstate 5.

This is just one example of the tens of thousands of bridges across America that are considered to be unsafe and structurally unsound. This one proved it.

A similar bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in the Twin Cities area, resulted in deaths as that bridge collapsed.

Infrastructure. American infrastructure, according to Duke University and the study they published a couple of years ago, ranks in the Ds. I do think we have one C. This is going to require glasses to try to find the one C in our infrastructure system.

Our ports are a C-plus. The rail systems, the private rail systems are a B. The rest of them are Ds and Fs. Roads, bridges, dams, on and on, sanitation systems, water systems.

All of us have heard about the problem in Michigan with the water system there. Well, it is repeated in California up and down the Central Valley of California with water systems that are contaminated in multiple ways, as they are in Michigan.

So, what are we going to do about it?

Well, we have the good fortune of an opportunity presented to us by Democratic leaders. Let me start with a couple of examples of what can be done if we were to Make It In America.

Take, for example, an American success story of Make It In America. The Tappan Zee Bridge in New York, they did it right. They did it with U.S.-manufactured steel. It was a \$3.9 billion project and 7,728 American jobs created.

Out in California, we do things a little differently and not always better. You have heard of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Well, they decided that the Chinese steel would be cheaper. It turned out it wasn't, and there were thousands of American jobs that didn't happen. It was \$3.9 billion over budget, as that Chinese steel was used. There were 3,000 jobs created in China, and the most modern steel mill in the world to produce steel that was badly welded and flawed in many ways.

So, we have a choice: We can make it in America, as New York did with the Tappan Zee Bridge, or you can have it made in China, as California did with the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, not our proudest moment.

For you who are not aware, I am a Californian. I was the Lieutenant Governor when this disaster was going on. I screamed and yelled and jumped up and down and said, What in the world are you doing? Oh, but it is cheaper. It is supposed to be by 10 percent. Cheap is not always better—an example of what could be done if we were to make it in America.

Now, this idea of Make It In America actually started with STENY HOYER, our minority whip. I am going to put up a couple of things. He has renewed his program that he and I worked on beginning in 2010.

Over the years we have talked about Make It In America. We have talked

about various ways it can be done, policies and the like. This Monday, Minority Whip STENY HOYER re-energized Make It In America. I think it is Make It In America 4.0.

So we have encouraged entrepreneurship by assuring access to workplace benefits like healthcare and retirement security, and providing more and stronger boosts to businesses with ideas and successful businesses.

I just came across one of these earlier today. I was talking to a friend out in California, Phil Wyatt, a Ph.D. guy who worked out of the University of California, Santa Barbara for some time. He came across a way of using a machine to analyze what is in something—a chemical analysis, an analysis of biological components, and the like. He started a company called Wyatt Technology.

It is an analytical machine that is used all around the world. It is used in healthcare. It is used in biology. It is used in chemical analysis and the like. The company is an American company, an entrepreneurship that was developed in this country. There are 88 straight quarters of profitability, and no way in hell is he going to allow the Chinese to steal it from him, even though his equipment is broadly used throughout the world. A great success story, Wyatt Technology.

So, where did it come from?

Well, it was an entrepreneurial program. We need more entrepreneurs. We need more entrepreneurs who are out there developing new businesses like Phil did several years back. They can do it. They are going to need support from their government. They need sound tax policy. They need the education and research that is going on in our universities.

They need to be able to accept the risk of starting a new business, whether it is a high-tech business or maybe it is somebody that wants to go out and work at a taco stand. But they ought to be able to have their healthcare and they ought to have their retirement security available to them as they go through that time.

So, that is one of the things that Mr. HOYER has talked about as he renews the Make It In America plan. We are going to hold infrastructure for a few moments and pick up the third element in his plan, which is education, which ties directly to what I talked about with Mr. Wyatt.

Wyatt's business, almost more than a decade old, actually came out of the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he was a professor and he was doing research. And so it is the educational system, not only at the high level, but also all the way down the line, promoting pathways for career opportunities.

A lot of this is something you might find in the career technical education field, where a man or woman learns to be a welder and then says, Well, I can start my own welding shop. I can become my own boss. So they do.

Or, maybe it is somebody that has learned hairstyling or cosmetics and decides they want to open their own shop. If they are able to have portable healthcare, if they have their retirement benefits, they can run the risk of starting their own business.

The training programs and education and the research all fit into this focus on education. So Mr. HOYER has outlined that as the second element.

The third element in the renewal of the Make It In America plan that he and I worked on in the beginning of 2010, and continued working on these many years, is a focus on infrastructure.

As I said earlier, as I talked about the failure of our basic infrastructure systems—water, sanitation, bridges, highways, reservoirs and dams—is this problem, also this opportunity. As I said, with this report coming out of Duke University, where they rated the infrastructure systems—as did the Society of Civil Engineers—it is a fact that if we are building our infrastructure system, for every dollar we invest in the infrastructure, we will be able to create 21,671 jobs. And for every billion dollars we invest, we will create those jobs. For every dollar we invest, we will improve the economy by \$3.54.

□ 2000

So the return on that \$1 investment is 3.5 to 1, so it makes a lot of sense to do that. Besides that, the bridges won't fall down and the dams won't crumble.

This one is extremely important: repairing and rebuilding our aging infrastructure. It also gives us the opportunity to innovate in the infrastructure of the future.

Well, as Mr. HOYER wants to talk about the infrastructure of the future, I want to talk about, for my remaining time here, the infrastructure of the past.

You may be aware that America is now a nation that exports a strategic national asset. It is our petroleum products. For fracking and other reasons, we are now an export nation when it comes to crude oil, gasoline, diesel, and, above all, natural gas. We have succeeded in turning this around from an importing nation to an exporting nation.

Some of these statistics lead me to an opportunity that we could rebuild, reenergize, a critical national infrastructure.

We don't often think about our maritime industry as being infrastructure, but it really is. It supports, to be sure. And we often talk about ports. We talk about intermodal, from the ship to the port, to the trail, to the train and rail, and then on to the highways. All true, but we often ignore the ship itself.

So here we are. The future of American shipbuilding actually resides in the export of oil and natural gas. By 2020, the U.S. is expected to be the world's third largest exporter of LNG, liquefied natural gas.

Mr. Speaker, 225 LNG vessels are expected to be added to the world fleet by

2020. Those are big ships. There is a little picture there of one.

Due to the eroded capacity of American shipyards, not one—none, nada, none—of those 225 LNG ships, vessels, will be built in American shipyards unless there is a law that requires that just a small part of that export of LNG be on American-built ships.

Similarly, oil, I don't have that up here, but none of the oil that will be exported from the United States will be on American-built ships unless there is a law.

So, are you surprised that we are proposing a law called the Energizing American Shipbuilding? It is a piece of legislation that I have introduced to deal with a critical infrastructure, the ships that America once had.

So, of 225 new LNG vessels, currently 70 percent of those orders are going to Korea and the rest to China, maybe a few to Japan, and none to the United States.

So, the legislation called Energizing American Shipbuilding Act, introduced by myself, H.R. 5893, was introduced a few weeks ago. It requires that a certain percentage of the liquefied natural gas and crude oil exports be transported on United States-built ships and American-flag vessels, crewed by American mariners, from the captains to the engineers to the seamen, American men and women on these American-built vessels.

A similar bill was introduced in the Senate by Senator WICKER, and that bill also does exactly the same thing. Senator CASEY, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. WITTMAN—two Democrats, two Republicans—introduced the legislation. In the Senate, one Republican and one Democrat have introduced the very same legislation, bipartisan, bicameral, and, by God, we ought to do it.

What happens if we were to do it? Well, let's look at some of the very simple opportunities that exist.

Instead of China and Korea and Japan building the ships for the export of this strategic national asset, let's do it in America. Let's make them in America.

The Energizing American Shipbuilding Act, introduced in the House and the Senate this year, if we were to pass this legislation, we are talking at least 50 new ships built in America. Let's see. That is 3, 6, 9, 12—about 15 of them, LNG ships, would be built here in the United States. And when they are commissioned and they are on the oceans, they would have American mariners on board providing a strategic advantage to our American defense policy. I will talk about that a little later.

There would be many, many more on the crude oil side, perhaps more than 30. Probably closer to 35 ships would be built in the next decade and a half to two decades, providing, oh, I don't know, maybe more than 1,500 jobs for American mariners.

And we haven't yet been able to calculate all the jobs in the shipyards of

America, but we know that, for San Diego, at the shipyards in San Diego, they would be building these ships. We know that they would be building these ships in the shipyards of the Gulf Coast and in the shipyards on the East Coast, particularly in Philadelphia. These jobs would be spread around at the shipyards on the West Coast, the Gulf of Mexico, and the East Coast.

And, just as important, the bill would require that the engines, the hydraulic systems, the pumps, the pipes, the electronics, that those, too, also be built in America.

We are talking about a major opportunity to make it in America, to make it in America once again so that America can continue to be a major place for the construction of American-built ships, whether those are naval ships, as they are today, required to be built in the United States, or whether they are commercial ships requiring that a small percentage of the export of oil and natural gas be on American-built ships with American sailors. Bottom line: manufacturing matters.

So, when Mr. HOYER, our minority whip, talks about renewing the Make It In America agenda and he talks about the necessity for that to be focusing on infrastructure, we put forward that a critical piece of that infrastructure is the American maritime industry—just as important as the trucks that travel our highways, another piece of infrastructure; just as important as the trains that travel the rails, another critical piece of infrastructure; just as important as the barges that move up and down the Mississippi River system on the Ohio, the Missouri, or the Mississippi itself. All of that is infrastructure, as are the airports and the airlines.

We ought to start and always think about the fact that we are a maritime nation and that in our infrastructure we consider the American maritime, we consider the ships and the men and the women who are on those ships.

Now, this is a national security issue. TRANSCOM, responsible for moving American military supplies around the world, has stated categorically that, unless we revive our American maritime industry, unless we have sailors and captains and engineers on ships who are able to transport our military wherever they need to go around the world, we are going to be in a world of hurt.

Earlier today, I was talking to one of the officers of Liberty Maritime, one of the American shipping companies, owners of ships that will soon be transporting a brigade of Reserve men and women from the United States to Europe as part of our European defense issues.

So it becomes important that we deal with the infrastructure of the United States and that we do so keeping in mind that these are American jobs that fulfill this important policy position. This is the value that, as we go about our legislative work here, we keep in

mind that the test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide for those who have too little.

Among those who have too little are the working men and women of America. And if we carry out this infrastructure challenge, if we make it in America, if the steel is American made, if the locomotives are American made—and there is a marvelous example of what can be done with public policy that says, if we are going to build locomotives for the Amtrak system on the Northeast corridor from Washington, D.C., to Boston, that those locomotives will be American made, with 100 percent American-made equipment.

Interestingly, when this was part of the American Recovery Act back in 2010, a bill put forward by Democrats and President Obama, there was a requirement for \$700 million or \$800 million to be spent on American-built locomotives, 100 percent American made. A German company said: Whoa, \$700 million? \$800 million? Locomotives? American made? We could do that.

So, in Sacramento, California, Siemens, one of the great manufacturing companies in the world, said: Well, let's see. We make not locomotives, but we do make cars for the transit systems. We can do locomotives.

And they did. Just this last week, I got off one of the Amtrak trains from New York City, walked past a gleaming locomotive, brand-new, and on the side it said "Siemens." I am going: That locomotive was made in Sacramento, California, just outside my district, by a German company with American workers, American steel, American wheels, American engines—made in America.

How did it happen? Because Congress, with Democrats in control and a Democratic President, said: We are not going to talk about making America great again; we are going to actually pass a law that says this money will be spent on American-made locomotives.

And so it was. And now that plant is continuing to expand as they produce cars for transit systems all across this Nation.

FDR had it right, and we are going to follow. We are going to make sure that the laws of this Nation actually provide for the working men and women; for those who don't have a job, an educational program, job training programs, career development programs in community colleges and high schools, apprenticeship programs, so that the men and women of America can participate in the revitalization of the American infrastructure system.

Whether that is a highway, an interstate freeway, an airport, a dock, or a port, we are going to make sure that the American workers have a chance not only in building the infrastructure, but in using the steel and the concrete and the other elements that go into these infrastructure projects. Those should also be made in America so that that infrastructure program flows way beyond just those who are pouring the

concrete to those who are making the cement and making the manufacturing plant that will develop the cement.

□ 2015

This is where we are. And by the way, we want to make sure that tax policy does not do what the Republicans have repeatedly done—2001, 2003 tax cuts and again in the 2017 tax cuts that have transferred \$2 trillion of American wealth to the top 1 percent. That is shameful, but that has actually happened. And all the while the rest of Americans have seen virtually no improvement in their economic situation.

Tax policy—critically important. Policy that requires that when we spend your tax dollar, that your tax dollar is spent on American jobs in American factories, putting Americans to work in what we call a "Make It In America" agenda.

And so keep this in mind, Mr. Trump, this is how you make America great again, by making it in America. So we can work with our Republican colleagues, as we are with our shipbuilding program, the Energizing American Shipbuilding Act. Democrats and Republicans understand, together, that it is public policy. It is the laws that we write that set the pace for economic growth and spread that growth out across the great American population so that everyone—everyone can participate in the rebuilding of America's infrastructure, whether it is a ship at sea, a port that is being developed, an airport, a highway or a railway, water system, sanitation system, we must write into all of those laws that when American taxpayer money is used, it is spent on American manufacturing and American workers.

So we will make it in America, and America will make it when we follow these kinds of wise public policies, keeping in mind that our task is to make sure that we always focus not on those who have much, but, rather, on those that have too little.

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

THE FIGHT TO SAVE AMERICA'S PATENT SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, before I get into the subject that I will be discussing today, let me just note that "American made" is only important if there are Americans actually in the jobs.

Who is the friend and who is the enemy of American workers today? Certainly the party that is permitting massive flow of illegal immigrants into our country in order to take the jobs that are being created is not a friend of the American working people.

Let us take a look at why Americans have prospered. We have prospered because, yes, we have technology and we have jobs. But it is also because we

have not permitted this massive immigration that now seems to be flowing across and has been for the last 10 and 20 years.

If we have industries that are going to succeed and jobs that are going to be created, we must first control our borders so that all of the jobs that we hear about being created are given to Americans, not to people who come here illegally.

It is unfortunate that that part of the debate in how illegal immigration has been bringing down the quality of life, taking jobs away from Americans, that that has not been part of the debate that we have heard over the media.

In fact, last week, we had an example where the Democratic party members here were unable to support a bill on the floor commending those brave souls who are defending our border and trying to stem the flow—the massive flow of illegal immigration into our country. They couldn't get themselves to back that.

Now, I went to an ICE facility, which is the group in our government that actually runs the facilities and helps us control this massive flow into our country, and the people there, yes, there were over 300 being held, and they were going to be returned. They were doing a good job for us.

And the fact is, in California, the Democratic party has gone so far overboard, they won't even permit local law enforcement—they have actually outlawed—they call it the sanctuary State law—they won't even let local governments permit them to use their own law enforcement to cooperate with Federal authorities in order to deal with illegal alien criminals.

Now, something is wrong here. We can hear all this talk about attacking Republicans as if all the tax money that was saved in this tax bill went to rich people. No, that is not the case. And what is also not the case is that the very jobs that are being created by such programs are going to foreigners who are here illegally, unless we do something about it.

So with that said, I would like to get into the issue that I really would like to—that I was intending to discuss today, and it has everything to do also with American prosperity. American prosperity didn't just happen. So I call this the Fight to Save America's Patent System.

We Americans are blessed to be part of a Nation where average people who live right and work hard can expect safety, a decent standard of living, and opportunities beyond the dreams of those who just struggle to survive in so much of the world—which is also why we have to control the borders. Because we do have a high standard of living in this world and we have this high standard of living for average people, it is not just a gift from God, but it is also a result of fundamental policies and laws that have governed our

land, including immigration laws, I might add, that prevent this massive flow of illegals into our country that we have been having to deal with.

Policies were put into place by brave, hardworking, forward-looking patriots over the years who struggled to create this new country, the United States of America. And they put in place fundamental laws that were aimed at protecting the rights of each and every person in the country.

One of those rights, which is often overlooked, was delineated in Article I, section 8 of the Constitution. In fact, considering the fact that the Bill of Rights was added to the document as a package of amendments, it is the only place in the original body of the Constitution where the word “right” is used. This is that part of our basic law of the land that mandates that writers and inventors have the right to exclusively control their creation for a specified period of time. That is in the Constitution. And that specified period of time, which through most of our history was 17 years—17 years for our inventors to control and profit from what they have created.

Benjamin Franklin probably inserted this into the Constitution without much fanfare, yet it has been a factor that has made all the difference. Ordinary Americans have lived good and decent lives here, not necessarily because we have worked harder—because people work hard all over the world—but we have prospered because not only have our people worked hard, but they have had the technological edge. We have multiplied the impact of every hour of labor with machines and equipment that existed only as a result of the genius of our people.

Progress was shared by all because we have nurtured our inventors, protected their intellectual property rights, and permitted them to profit from their genius. Our standard of living as a people became the envy of the world, and all this can be traced to a strong, fair, and honest patent system.

I have got good news. American inventors, the folks who are so often taken for granted, are deeply appreciated by the new Trump administration. Secretary Wilbur Ross and the new director of the United States Patent Office, Andrei Iancu—I guess that is how you pronounce that—are making sure that America’s greatest assets, our inventors and our innovators, are protected. This is, of course, a reversal of what has been going on in recent years.

The United States Patent and Trademark Office, or the USPTO, is the Federal agency tasked with the job of protecting America’s new ideas and investments in innovation and creativity. Over the years, there have been 58 different men and women leading this agency.

Our newest USPTO director, Andrei Iancu, shows the promise to be perhaps one of the best in that long line that extends back more than 200 years. Di-

rector Iancu has a long history in innovation, from his work as an engineer at Hughes Aircraft Company and his legal career that focused on intellectual property litigation. He has assured me personally that he will fight to protect the intellectual property of our inventors, and he will demand that accountability and transparency are hallmarks in the patent office under his watch. His positive commitment is refreshing. That is, to make sure that we have this transparency and accountability that he is talking about is a refreshing contrast to past office leadership.

Most of my colleagues and most of my fellow Americans have rarely noticed the conflict that has been quietly raging here in Washington for the last three decades. It has been an ongoing struggle with major impact on the security of our country and the well-being of the American people.

Yet few Members of Congress are even aware of how critical this fight is, and because the fight is usually fought in legalese, the American people are unaware of the issues being determined. What I am talking about is an ongoing clandestine attack on America’s patent system by powerful multinational corporations. Their aim has been to gain a free hand to use any technology with no worry of compensating the inventor of that said technology.

American companies and American workers have succeeded by being on the cutting edge and a notch above foreign competition. This is because our innovators have been protected by the best patent system in the world. Yet, we hear these calls globally, and in collusion with domestic power brokers, demands that we harmonize our system with the rest of the world.

If there is any harmonization, it should be the rest of the world rising up to our long-held standards which have been instrumental in enabling our way of life and our country’s greatness. We absolutely should not lower America’s standards.

But that is exactly what a powerful coalition has been pushing for. And in 2012, with the America Invents Act, they finally were able to undermine significant protections of our patent system. The implications of that law are just now becoming evident.

So, for three decades, legislation aimed at weakening America’s patent protection has been pushed and re-pushed, whittling away, and restructuring with the goal to diminish the rights of our inventors. This establishment thinks these are people who are just in the way. The anti-patent juggernaut cabal even managed to change who will be issued a patent.

Up until 2012, up until that law, for more than two centuries, the actual inventor of new technology was legally considered the rightful owner of the invention and thus designated as the recipient of the patent for that new technology.

This longstanding and commonsense policy was shifted by that 2012 bill so

that now, not the inventor, but the first entity to file for the patent gets the patent. Hear that again: The actual inventor doesn’t get the patent. In an age of hacking and predatory corporations, this is a disaster in the making.

□ 2030

Even as we lost ground in the legislative fight to protect our inventors’ rights, there was even less awareness of a change in the way they were doing business inside the Patent Office. There has always been a strict guideline directing the decisions and actions of the professionals and civil servants the Patent Office.

Approval of a patent application was not left up to the whims of those making the decision. If an application met the requirements, objective criteria, and the proper procedures were followed, if that happened, the Patent Office employee was mandated to do his or her duty, not to think how they should feel about the economic and societal changes that might be brought about when a new technology is introduced, or what groups would benefit and which ones wouldn’t, if this new technology was patented.

I am not certain what precipitated the power play, but, in 1994, changes began happening surreptitiously inside the Patent Office itself, even as overt legislative campaigns were taking place to weaken our patent system, and they were being launched on the outside.

So you had people working on the inside and the outside, trying to weaken the patent protection of American inventors.

A new procedure was quietly made part of the system inside. It was theoretically aimed at alerting senior patent personnel that a patent with serious consequences was soon to be granted and, thus, given more intense scrutiny. It was called SAWS, Sensitive Application Warning System. But, as you would imagine, as soon as this secretive new element was added to the Patent Office procedures, it began to have much more of an impact than supposedly intended.

Unauthorized and hidden SAWS rules and determinations were made that had a major impact on the basic business of the Patent Office, the issuing or denial of an inventor’s patent. Some Patent Office officials took it upon themselves to violate the clear legal boundaries that were in place specifically to prevent well-intended subjectivity from running wild. SAWS had a big impact, much bigger than they ever thought, and it had no scrutiny.

So inventors were being skewered from the outside by those legislators mobilized by powerful multinational corporations, and by other special interests as well, I might add, and on the inside by an in-the-shadows system that permitted unrestricted consideration, no visibility, and no accountability.

It took more than 20 years for this to come to light and officially ended. In

2015, the SAWS program was exposed and made public. And after congressional hearings and inquiries, the Patent Office announced the program had been retired. As one senior patent official told me, “That program had to go.”

So it has been an ongoing struggle on the outside and on the inside to maintain the strength and integrity of America’s patent system.

On the legislative side, there is a bipartisan coalition now, led by dedicated Representatives like MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio and THOMAS MASSIE of Kentucky. They just introduced H.R. 6264, Restoring America’s Leadership in Innovation Act of 2018, a bill that will, if we can get it enacted, undo many of the legislative setbacks America’s patent system has suffered in the last two decades. I am, of course, an original cosponsor of that bill, and I invite my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring it.

There is really good news—and here is some really good news—from the executive branch. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross is deeply committed to protecting the intellectual property of American inventors. He is willing to fight the good fight to protect us against foreign competitors who would steal our inventors’ genius and use it against our own hardworking people.

Secretary Ross is working with our new director of the Patent Office, Andrei Iancu, and he is committed to protecting inventors and creators. Both of them, with President Trump’s guidance and Vice President PENCE’s encouragement, are declaring that the patent system will be totally transparent and fully accountable.

I might say, Director Iancu has just reaffirmed that commitment in a written statement to Congress:

Today, at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, every action we take is on the public record and recorded in a publicly available database.

So there is reason for optimism that we have turned a corner in our long-term efforts to protect—and, yes, reclaim and maintain and repair—some of the damages that have been done from both the outside attack of our patent system and the inside, out-of-line actions that were taken without oversight or accountability, like the SAWS program.

It is not appropriate to cover up or withhold information. It is time to make up for those past errors and to

set a path for America’s Patent Office to offer efficient, honest, and totally above-board service.

The new director has his hands full. But he has the right game plan: total transparency and full accountability.

When it comes to innovation and technology, we are, with our American President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Commerce, and the team over at the Patent Office, together, making America great again.

So I would ask my colleagues, please, I know this is a complicated issue, we talked to the American people, we know that patent law seems like it should be complicated, but it is not. For someone who invents something, our Founding Fathers put into place a property right for those people who invent, an inventor, to be able, at least for 17 years, have control over his or her invention.

This has worked well for the United States. It is so sad that, for decades now, they have been trying to undermine it. But we are reclaiming that today with the Trump administration, the Secretary of Commerce, the head of the Patent Office, and the Vice President of the United States, who are dedicated to protecting the rights of our inventors and, thus, protecting the great standard of living and the safety of the United States of America, which is so dependent on having a technological edge against any competitor or enemy.

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

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE PURSUANT TO ARTICLE I, SECTION 7, OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution constituting a question of the privileges of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 1019

Resolved, That the conference report accompanying H.R. 5515, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, in the opinion of this House, contravenes the first clause of the seventh section of the first arti-

cle of the Constitution of the United States and is an infringement of the privileges of this House and that such bill be respectfully recommitted to the committee of conference.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution presents a question of the privileges of the House.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 8 o’clock and 39 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2128

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) at 9 o’clock and 28 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–873) on the resolution (H. Res. 1020) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o’clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the second quarter of 2018, pursuant to Public Law 95–384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JOSH MARTIN, EXPENDED BETWEEN MAY 24 AND JUNE 4, 2018

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Josh Martin	5/25	5/26	France		190.00			(3)			190.00

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JOSH MARTIN, EXPENDED BETWEEN MAY 24 AND JUNE 4, 2018—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
	5/27	5/29	India	11,118.00	163.50			(³)		11,118.00	163.50
	5/29	5/30	Sri Lanka		97.00			(³)			97.00
	5/30	6/1	Philippines		270.00			(³)			270.00
	6/1	6/3	Singapore		220.00			(³)			220.00
Committee total					940.00						940.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Military air transportation.

JOSH MARTIN, July 2, 2018.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2018

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Glenn Thompson	5/24	5/30	France		2,857.00		(³)				2,857.00
	5/30	5/31	England		382.00		(³)				382.00
Committee total					3,239.00						3,239.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Military air transportation.

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, Chairman, July 17, 2018.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2018

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☐

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX, Chairman, July 12, 2018.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ETHICS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2018

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☐

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS, Chairman, July 12, 2018.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2018

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Lamar Smith	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,375.80		(³)				1,375.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Hon. Zoe Lofgren	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,333.80		(³)				1,333.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Hon. Ed Perlmutter	4/2	4/5	Chile	375,521	617.83		(³)				617.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,305.80		(³)				1,305.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,356,000	484.92		(³)				484.29
Hon. Randy Hultgren	4/2	4/5	Chile	337,837	555.83		(³)				555.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,305.80		(³)				1,305.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,244,001	444.29		(³)				444.29
Hon. Suzanne Bonamici	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,333.80		(³)				1,333.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Hon. Randy Weber	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,333.80		(³)				1,333.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Hon. Brian Babin	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,333.80		(³)				1,333.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Ashley Smith	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,375.80		(³)				1,375.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Cliff Shannon	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,202.56		(³)				1,202.56
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Ashlee Vinyard	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2018—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Jenn Wickre	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,375.80		(³)				1,375.80
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,202.56		(³)				1,202.56
Kristin Kopshever	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
	4/2	4/5	Chile	392,540	645.83		(³)				645.83
	4/5	4/8	Ecuador		1,202.56		(³)				1,202.56
	4/8	4/10	Colombia	1,468,000	524.29		(³)				524.29
Committee total					29,503.95						29,503.95

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.³ Military air transportation.

HON. LAMAR SMITH, Chairman, July 9, 2018.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2018

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Eric Burgeson	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Kathy Dedrick	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Hon. Garret Graves	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Hon. Daniel Lipinski	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Fleming Legg	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Hon. Sean Patrick Maloney	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Collin McCune	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Hon. David Rouzer	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Hon. William F. Shuster	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Brittany Smith	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Rebekah Sungala	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
Chris Vieson	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00						1,538.00
CMTE Expenses	4/3	4/7	Australia		1,538.00		7,732.00		1,557.00		1,538.00
Total Australia					18,456.00		7,732.00		1,557.00		27,745.00
Eric Burgeson	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Kathy Dedrick	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Hon. Garret Graves	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Hon. Daniel Lipinski	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Fleming Legg	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Hon. Sean Patrick Maloney	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Collin McCune	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Hon. David Rouzer	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Hon. William F. Shuster	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Brittany Smith	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Rebekah Sungala	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
Chris Vieson	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00						431.00
CMTE Expenses	4/7	4/8	New Zealand		431.00		3,292.00		1,439.00		4,731.00
Total New Zealand					5,172.00		3,292.00		1,439.00		9,903.00
Hon. Alan Lowenthal	4/13	4/16	Peru		2,022.36						2,022.36
Committee total					25,650.36		11,024.00		2,996.00		39,670.36

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. BILL SHUSTER, Chairman, July 12, 2018.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2018

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☐¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. KEVIN BRADY, Vice Chairman, July 9, 2018.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5742. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition and Sustainment, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report titled "Fiscal Year 2017 Purchases From Foreign Entities", pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 8305; Public Law 104-201, Sec. 827 (as amended by Public Law 111-350, Sec. 3); (124 Stat. 3833) and Public Law 115-31, Sec. 8029(b); (131 Stat. 253); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5743. A letter from the Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's Report to the Congress on the Profitability of Credit Card Operations of Depository Institutions, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1637 note; Public Law 100-583, Sec. 8; (102 Stat. 2969); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5744. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — National Flood Insurance Program: Removal of Monroe County Pilot Inspection Program Regulations [Docket ID: FEMA-2018-0027] (RIN: 1660-AA93) received July 18, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-

121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5745. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Housing — Federal Housing Commissioner, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Streamlining Inspection Requirements for Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Single-Family Mortgage Insurance: Removal of the FHA Inspector Roster [Docket No.: FR-5457-F-02] (RIN: 2502-AJ03) received July 12, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5746. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final rule — Student Assistance General Provisions, Federal Perkins Loan Program, Federal Family Education Loan Program, William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program, and Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant Program; Corrections [Docket ID: ED-2017-OPE-0112] (RIN: 1840-AD28) received July 17, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868) and 20 U.S.C. 1232(f); Public Law 90-247, Sec. 437(f) (as added Public Law 91-230, Sec. 401(a)(10)); (84 Stat. 169); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

5747. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's Strategic Petroleum Reserve Annual Report for Calendar Year 2015, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 6245 Public Law 94-163, Sec. 165 (as amended by Public Law 106-469, Sec. 103(17)); (114 Stat. 2032) (114 Stat. 2032); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5748. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a Declaration that Circumstances Exist Justifying an Authorization Pursuant to Section 564 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5749. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Diversion Control Division, DEA, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's temporary amendment — Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of NM2201, 5F-AB-PINACA, 4-CN-CUMYL-BUTINACA, MMB-CHMICA and 5F-CUMYL-P7AICA Into Schedule I [Docket No.: DEA-479] received July 17, 2018, 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.

5750. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Diversion Control Division, DEA, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Controlled Substances Quotas [Docket No.: DEA-480] (RIN: 1117-AB48) received July 17, 2018, 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.

5751. A letter from the Chief Executive Officer, U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, transmitting the Agency's 2017 Annual Report and Financial Audit, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 2002(b); Public Law 109-469, Sec. 702(b); (120 Stat. 3534); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5752. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Medical Use of By-product Material — Medical Event Definitions, Training and Experience, and Clarifying Amendments [NRC-2008-0175] (RIN: 3150-AI63) received July 17, 2018, 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.

5753. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report certifying that the export of the listed items to the People's Republic of China is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2778 note; Public Law 105-261, Sec. 1512 (as amended by Public Law 105-277, Sec. 146); (112 Stat. 2174); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5754. A letter from the Assistant Legal Advisor, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting reports concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1(a) (as amended by Public Law 108-458, Sec. 7121(b)); (118 Stat. 3807); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5755. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 17-074, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5756. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a notification of discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5757. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a notification of a designation of acting officer and nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5758. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a notification of a designation of acting officer, and a notification of a discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5759. A letter from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the NCUA Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and 2018 Annual Performance Plan, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 306(a); Public Law 103-62, Sec. 3(a) (as amended by Public Law 111-352, Sec. 2); (124 Stat. 3866) and 31 U.S.C. 1115(b); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 3; (124 Stat. 3867); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5760. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program: Expiration of Coverage of Children of Same-Sex Domestic Partners; Federal Flexible Benefits Plan: Pre-Tax Payment of Health Benefits Premiums: Conforming Amendments (RIN: 3206-AN34) received July 17, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5761. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's Inspector General Semiannual Report for the period of October 1, 2017, to March 31, 2018, pursuant to Sec. 5 of Public Law 95-452, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5762. A letter from the Executive Director, United States Access Board, transmitting the Board's FY 2017 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5763. A letter from the Chairman and CEO, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Organization; Funding and Fiscal Affairs, Loan Policies and Operations, and Funding Operations; Investment Eligibility (RIN: 3052-AC84) received July 18, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5764. A letter from the Federal Liaison Officer, United States Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Rules Governing Trademark Interferences [Docket No.: PTO-T-2017-0032] (RIN: 0651-AD23) received July 17, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec.

251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5765. A letter from the Impact Analyst, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the Secretary (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Schedule for Rating Disabilities: Skin (RIN: 2900-AP27) received July 17, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

5766. A letter from the Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled "The MEDIC Produced Some Positive Results but More Could be Done to Enhance its Effectiveness" (OEI-03-17-00310), pursuant to Public Law 114-198, Sec. 704(c)(2)(B); (130 Stat. 750); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

5767. A letter from the Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting an update on the ongoing monitoring of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' implementation of a new Medicare payment system for clinical diagnostic laboratory tests; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5649. A bill to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to amend the Social Security Act, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115-864, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5882. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the termination by a spouse of a lessee of certain leases when the lessee dies while in military service (Rept. 115-865). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 2409. A bill to allow servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed (Rept. 115-866). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 2787. A bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a pilot program instituting a clinical observation program for pre-med students preparing to attend medical school; with an amendment (Rept. 115-867). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5693. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts and agreements for the placement of veterans in non-Department medical foster homes for certain veterans who are unable to live independently; with amendments (Rept. 115-868). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5974. A bill to direct the

Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115-869). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5538. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain additional periods of active duty service for purposes of suspending charges to veterans' entitlement to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs during periods of suspended participation in vocational rehabilitation programs (Rept. 115-870). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5938. A bill to amend the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a vacancy and recruitment database to facilitate the recruitment of certain members of the Armed Forces to satisfy the occupational needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish and implement a training and certification program for intermediate care technicians in that Department, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115-871). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5864. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish qualifications for the human resources positions within the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-872). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 1020. Resolution waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 115-873). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 6479. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to include short-term limited duration plans in the definition of individual health insurance coverage; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. BORDALLO:

H.R. 6480. A bill to allow the Governor of Guam to determine temporary need of non-immigrant workers on Guam, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 6481. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, for the purpose of addressing public health crises, to require the manufacturers of covered products to develop, maintain, and update a plan to mitigate the effects of such products on public health, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. YOHO, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. BABIN):

H.R. 6482. A bill to prohibit Federal payments to a unit of local government that al-

lows individuals who are not citizens of the United States to vote in elections for State or local office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 6483. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to provide adjustment assistance to farmers adversely affected by reduced exports resulting from tariffs imposed as retaliation for United States tariff increases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SCHRADER, and Ms. BONAMICI):

H.R. 6484. A bill to provide for the designation of the Devil's Staircase Wilderness Area in the State of Oregon, to designate segments of Wasson and Franklin Creeks in the State of Oregon as wild or recreation rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. KHANNA (for himself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. MOORE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 6485. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to carry out a Federal subsidized employment program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LAHOOD (for himself and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama):

H.R. 6486. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude certain post graduation scholarship grants from gross income in the same manner as qualified scholarships to promote economic growth; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 6487. A bill to provide for greater consultation between the Federal government and the governing bodies of land grant-mercedes and acequias in New Mexico and to provide for a process for recognition of the historic-traditional boundaries of land grant-mercedes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARTON (for himself and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 6488. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to exempt from certain criminal penalties the offering and use of certain pharmaceutical manufacturer copayment coupons to waive or reduce cost-sharing otherwise applied under the Medicare prescription drug benefit; 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. BARRAGAN:

H.R. 6489. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a grant program for the relocation of certain petroleum storage facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Mr. COLE, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. SCALISE):

H.R. 6490. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to treat the service of Members of the United States Capitol Police who are

transferred directly to an administrative or supervisory position with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center as a law enforcement officer service for purposes of the Federal Employees' Retirement System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, 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 Ms. CASTOR of Florida (for herself and Mr. MCKINLEY):

H.R. 6491. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to require the Drug Enforcement Administration to report certain information on distribution of opioids to manufacturers and distributors to help identify, report, and stop suspicious orders of opioids and reduce diversion rates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on 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. DEGETTE:

H.R. 6492. A bill to designate certain lands in the State of Colorado as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 6493. A bill to amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, to improve public understanding of how transportation investments are made by public agencies through establishing greater transparency and accountability processes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 6494. A bill to expose and deter unlawful and subversive foreign interference in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Financial Services, and Rules, 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. GABBARD (for herself, Mr.

CURBELO of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. SOTO, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CRIST, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. CORREA, Ms. LEE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. POLIS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 6495. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to enter into a 10-year arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences to conduct and update biennially a study on the effects of State legalized marijuana programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Education and the Workforce, 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. JOYCE of Ohio (for himself and Mr. TURNER):

H.R. 6496. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to ensure that preexisting condition exclusions with respect to enrollment in health insurance coverage and group health plans continue to be prohibited; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 6497. A bill to enhance rail safety and provide for the safe and covered transport of materials in railroad cars, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 6498. A bill to improve mental health services; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. TORRES (for herself and Mr. POE of Texas):

H.R. 6499. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to authorize the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to issue loans to homeowners in areas at risk for disasters to carry out pre-disaster mitigation activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. WALZ (for himself, Mr. DENHAM, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. BOST, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. KIND, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, and Mr. CARBAJAL):

H.R. 6500. A bill to expand the availability of programs of the Department of Agriculture to veteran farmers and ranchers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania:

H. Res. 1017. A resolution requesting the President, and directing the Secretary of State, to transmit to the House of Representatives copies of all documents, records, communications, transcripts, summaries, notes, memoranda, and read-aheads in their possession referring or relating to certain communications between President Donald Trump and President Vladimir Putin; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H. Res. 1018. A resolution requesting the President to transmit to the House of Representatives certain documents in the possession of the President relating to the determination to impose certain tariffs and to the strategy of the United States with respect to China; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H. Res. 1019. A resolution raising a question of the privileges of the House pursuant to article I, section 7, of the United States Constitution; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H. Res. 1021. A resolution calling upon any agreement reached between the President and Vladimir Putin at their meeting in Helsinki, Finland, to be approved by Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), 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. JOYCE of Ohio:

H. Res. 1022. A resolution condemning the ongoing illegal occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, Financial Services, and 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. TED LIEU of California (for himself, Mr. JONES, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas):

H. Res. 1023. A resolution condemning Vladimir Putin's attack on United States officials and reaffirming support for those Americans who have served their Nation; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H. Res. 1024. A resolution reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote international religious freedom and marking the 20th anniversary of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998; 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. TAKANO (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. POCAN):

H. Res. 1025. A resolution expressing support for policies that maintain a robust, fully-funded and staffed Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs and do not jeopardize care for veterans by moving essential resources to the private sector; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

231. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, relative to Senate Resolution No. 154, urging the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives to return to Tennessee a report compiled by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation on the Martin Luther King assassination known as "MLK Document 200472" that was submitted to the United States House Select Committee on Assassinations in 1976; to the Committee on House Administration.

232. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana, relative to House Resolution No. 219, memorializing the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to adopt and enact the legislation to be proposed in the 115th Congress, Second Session, that would establish the Caddo Lake National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

233. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 48, memorializing the United States Congress and the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to take such actions as are necessary to rectify the revenue sharing inequities between coastal and interior energy producing states and to ensure the dependability of such revenue sharing; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

234. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 110, to memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to adopt and enact the legislation to be proposed in the 115th Congress, Second Session, that would establish the Caddo Lake National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

235. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relative to Senate Resolution No. 326, urging the Congress of the United States to adopt the National Park Service's recommendation to extend the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to include the additional sites along the Lewis and Clark Expedition's Eastern Legacy; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

236. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana, rel-

ative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 87, to express support of the right of American citizens to keep and bear arms; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

237. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 110, to memorialize the United States Congress to pass legislation that supports efforts to build, modernize, and maintain the United States' infrastructure with consideration of certain principles; jointly to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Education and the Workforce, Energy and Commerce, and Natural Resources.

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. RUIZ:

H.R. 6479.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution, to provide for the general welfare and make all laws necessary and proper to carry out the powers of Congress.

By Ms. BORDALLO:

H.R. 6480.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 6481.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina:

H.R. 6482.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER:

H.R. 6483.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 6484.

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. KHANNA:

H.R. 6485.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. LAHOOD:

H.R. 6486.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

"The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . ."

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 6487.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII

By Mr. BARTON:

H.R. 6488.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. BARRAGÁN:

H.R. 6489.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 6490.

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, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H.R. 6491.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. DeGETTE:

H.R. 6492.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 and Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 6493.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 6494.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Ms. GABBARD:

H.R. 6495.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The United States Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. JOYCE of Ohio:

H.R. 6496.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 6497.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 6498.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, clause 3

By Mrs. TORRES:

H.R. 6499.

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 Mr. WALZ:

H.R. 6500.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 5 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 15: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 99: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 149: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 184: Mr. CRIST.

H.R. 233: Mr. KATKO and Mr. GOMEZ.

H.R. 371: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 530: Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Ms. HANABUSA.

H.R. 676: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 712: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 754: Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. NEAL, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. HUIZENGA, and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 762: Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 811: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 1017: Mrs. LESKO.

H.R. 1054: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1144: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 1201: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 1205: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 1227: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 1272: Mr. ESPAILLAT.

H.R. 1291: Mr. CORREA.

H.R. 1300: Mrs. LOWEY and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 1318: Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 1415: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 1439: Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 1447: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1562: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 1651: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 1757: Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 1872: Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 1904: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 1953: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 2055: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 2069: Mr. SMUCKER.

H.R. 2327: Ms. ROSEN.

H.R. 2358: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 2472: Mr. FASO and Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 2482: Mr. HURD.

H.R. 2650: Mr. DONOVAN and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 2735: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 2748: Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 2803: Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 2856: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 2918: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 2978: Mr. LAMB.

H.R. 3026: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3048: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 3113: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. HIGGINS of New York.

H.R. 3207: Mr. LAMB, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. ADAMS, and Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 3239: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY.

H.R. 3349: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 3391: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 3415: Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 3467: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3523: Mr. LOEBSACK and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3635: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 3670: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 3671: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 3707: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 3751: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 3790: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3956: Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 4099: Mr. UPTON, Ms. ROSEN, and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 4107: Mr. CASTRO of Texas and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 4143: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 4202: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 4238: Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 4256: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 4306: Mr. KATKO, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 4454: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 4518: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 4638: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 4693: Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 4700: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 4732: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 4859: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 4884: Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 4914: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 4941: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 5011: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 5085: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 5107: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania and Mr. HUIZENGA.

H.R. 5141: Mr. TURNER, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 5145: Ms. LEE, Mr. NORCROSS, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 5153: Mr. BUCK, Mr. POLIQUIN, Ms. ROSELEHTINEN, and Mr. BUDD.

H.R. 5188: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 5233: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 5241: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.

H.R. 5281: Mr. BUDD and Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 5306: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 5339: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 5358: Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 5384: Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 5429: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 5499: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. YODER, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. HECK, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 5524: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 5561: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, and Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 5595: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 5602: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 5609: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 5621: Mr. CALVERT and Mrs. RADEWAGEN.

H.R. 5671: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.

H.R. 5697: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 5713: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 5732: Mr. BOST.

H.R. 5780: Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

H.R. 5856: Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota.

H.R. 5885: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 5924: Mr. MEADOWS and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 5945: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 5949: Mr. DAVIDSON.

H.R. 5955: Mr. HIGGINS of New York.

H.R. 5988: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. ADERHOLT.

H.R. 6016: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 6037: Mr. BUDD.

H.R. 6071: Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 6081: Mr. ABRAHAM and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 6086: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 6108: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 6137: Ms. JAYAPAL and Ms. SÁNCHEZ.

H.R. 6145: Mr. ESPAILLAT.

H.R. 6193: Mr. POLIS, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 6207: Mr. COHEN, Mr. RUSSELL, and Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 6216: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 6217: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 6219: Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 6227: Mr. DEFazio and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 6236: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 6251: Ms. DELAURO.
 H.R. 6275: Mr. STIVERS.
 H.R. 6278: Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 6294: Ms. ESHOO.
 H.R. 6337: Mr. STEWART, Ms. STEFANIK, Mrs. LOVE, and Mr. BUDD.
 H.R. 6344: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 6345: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia and Mr. GUTHRIE.
 H.R. 6354: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 6360: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 6364: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 6378: Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
 H.R. 6379: Mr. CURBELO of Florida and Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
 H.R. 6396: Ms. DELBENE.
 H.R. 6400: Mr. YOHO, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. OLSON, Mrs. HANDEL, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
 H.R. 6417: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, and Mr. AMODEI.
 H.R. 6421: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H.R. 6426: Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 6442: Miss RICE of New York.
 H.R. 6449: Mr. COOPER.
 H.R. 6455: Mr. COHEN and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
 H.R. 6459: Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 6467: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
 H.R. 6468: Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 6469: Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 6474: Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. BORDALLO, and Ms. PINGREE.
 H.J. Res. 31: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY.
 H.J. Res. 48: Ms. MATSUI.
 H. Con. Res. 72: Mr. CALVERT.
 H. Res. 257: Mr. WITTMAN.
 H. Res. 274: Mr. COFFMAN.
 H. Res. 413: Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BERA, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CORREA, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. COSTA, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. MENG, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. SMUCKER.
 H. Res. 518: Mr. FASO.
 H. Res. 766: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. KING of New York.
 H. Res. 826: Mr. RUSSELL and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
 H. Res. 864: Mr. RICHMOND and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
 H. Res. 869: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H. Res. 932: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SENBRENNER, and Mrs. COMSTOCK.
 H. Res. 967: Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. KATKO, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. FASO, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. KINZINGER, and Ms. STEFANIK.
 H. Res. 981: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
 H. Res. 983: Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida.
 H. Res. 993: Ms. MENG, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. TITUS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. SIRES, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. SERRANO.
 H. Res. 1008: Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. COOPER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. HIGGINS of New York.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 2069: Mr. HASTINGS.



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JULY 24, 2018

No. 124

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 King, You are great and marvelous. You alone are God. Without Your wondrous deeds, our Nation and planet could not survive. You continue to perform wonders on our behalf, rescuing us from ourselves.

Lord, inspire our lawmakers to acknowledge Your sovereignty. Teach them Your precepts so that they may walk in Your truth, experiencing the reverential awe that comes from Your presence. Provide wisdom and knowledge to our legislative leaders, bringing stability to our land.

Sovereign God, Ruler of all nature, You alone will we worship, for You keep us on the path of wisdom.

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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING OFFICER JACOB CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE JOHN GIBSON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I begin this morning by remembering two heroes and the events that claimed their lives 20 years ago today, right here in the Capitol.

On July 24, 1998, U.S. Capitol Police Officer Jacob Chestnut and Detective John Gibson made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of American democracy. By doing their duty, these heroes helped cut short an act of brutal violence that could have claimed many more lives. That same week, Officer Chestnut and Detective Gibson lay in honor in the Capitol Rotunda, and an entire Nation paid its respects.

I imagine 20 years have not made this senseless violence any easier to bear for the families these men left behind or for their brothers and sisters in the Capitol Police. Yet, as we remember their bravery, a triumphant example endures of selfless service and fearless heroism—of two men who embodied the values that keep this building and our Nation standing safe and sound.

Today, we honor Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut. We renew our condolences to their families. We recognize the depth of our gratitude for them and for everyone who puts on the uniform and steps into harm's way every single day.

APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, now, on an entirely different matter, yesterday, the Senate began considering our next set of appropriations measures for fiscal year 2019.

Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY have led an exemplary bipartisan process through subcommittee and full committee work. Yesterday, that same bipartisan spirit was here on the floor when we were able to proceed to these measures by consent. Let's keep up that productive and coopera-

tive spirit so we can achieve the goal we all share—completing a regular appropriations process and avoiding another omnibus.

The measures before us encompass agriculture, interior and the environment, transportation and housing, and financial services and general government. They would deliver real resources to help American communities face real challenges—challenges like clearing the backlog of infrastructure needs that are holding back rural America and challenges like fighting the opioid epidemic that threatens families and communities.

Among the many, many things this legislation would accomplish, it meets these two challenges head on. It delivers nearly one-half billion dollars in loans and grant funding for rural broadband. It supplies \$400 million to accelerate the delivery of water and waste infrastructure projects across rural America. It would also deliver more assistance to all of the areas of our country that are living under the long shadow of the opioid crisis—tens of millions to help the FDA crack down on the spread of illicit drugs and to improve care in rural communities through distance learning and telemedicine.

These are just a few of the important provisions in these bills. I look forward to considering them this week. I hope we will have a robust amendment process, and then, with bipartisan cooperation, we can take these next steps together.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on a final matter, yesterday, the White House hosted a "Made in America" showcase, featuring products that were manufactured in each State, including from Stoneware & Co., in my home State, which makes the famous Louisville stoneware kitchen and dining sets.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Well, talking about reviving American manufacturing is nothing new in this town. In his 2013 State of the Union Address, President Obama insisted that “our first priority is making America a magnet for new jobs and manufacturing.”

Every few years, it seemed our Democratic friends over in the House would hold yet another press conference to talk about getting manufacturing moving. So rhetoric was not in short supply during the Obama era. What was harder to come by were actual results. On President Obama's watch, on net, our country lost more than 300,000 manufacturing jobs.

Year after year, Democratic policies led to insufficient, sluggish, and uneven economic growth that left much of the country behind. Eight years of this so-called recovery couldn't even get us back to the same number of manufacturing jobs that we had when President Obama first took his oath of office.

There are a number of reasons why. Yet here is one thing we heard loud and clear from U.S. manufacturers: High taxes, heavy regulations, and other Democratic policies put the wind squarely in their faces. Back in 2013, more than 75 percent of U.S. manufacturers said a hostile climate due to taxes and regulations was a major business obstacle.

What about the present? What about now?

This united Republican government has put an end to one burdensome regulation after another. We cut through the redtape that held back small businesses, local lenders, and manufacturers. We overhauled the Tax Code, leaving families with more to spend and invest and leaving job creators with more flexibility to compete and win.

What were the results?

Less than 2 years into the new administration, an all-time high of 95.1 percent of U.S. manufacturers have a positive outlook. Now fewer than one in five says a hostile business climate due to things like taxes and regulations is a top obstacle, and more than two-thirds are planning to hire this year. These aren't just numbers; this is real life.

At Jamison Door in Hagerstown, MD, tax reform made possible a 400-percent increase in plant size.

In my home State of Kentucky, it is estimated that more than 1,000 construction jobs will be needed to help build a new aluminum rolling mill for Braid Industries. Over the next 7 years, tax reform is expected to save the company—listen to this—\$150 million, which will help to support this investment and the 600 permanent new jobs the company estimates it will create in the Commonwealth.

So let's sum it up. Republican policies have helped generate the very outcomes Democrats claim they wanted. American manufacturing is thriving on our watch, but now Democrats aren't cheering. In fact, they have tried to

block most of the policies that have helped this happen.

They voted against tax reform—every Democrat in the House and the Senate. They have protested regulatory reform every step of the way. They want to go right back to their old ways—repeal the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, raise taxes, and pile on more crushing regulations.

We are not going to let that happen because we agree that manufacturing growth is vital for American prosperity, and unlike our friends across the aisle, we have the ideas and the policies to help make that goal into reality.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING OFFICER JACOB CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE JOHN GIBSON

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, 20 years ago today, in the late afternoon, shots rang out in this building. A mentally ill individual, armed with a gun, was coming through security when he shot Capitol Police Officer Jacob Chestnut. He then approached the Capitol office of Tom DeLay and engaged Detective John Gibson, and they exchanged gunfire. Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut lost their lives in the line of duty while protecting this building's occupants and visitors.

There is no way of knowing how many lives they saved in their sacrifice, but their families know that their sacrifice has not been forgotten by all of us here. Their memory is a blessing to their families and to all of us here who remember that awful day.

I join the distinguished Republican leader today in recognizing the anniversary of their passing as a solemn reminder of the everyday heroism practiced by the Capitol Police and their brothers and sisters in blue all across the country.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the Senate has a constitutional duty to provide advice and consent and a special obligation to thoroughly examine Supreme Court nominations. After all, there are few positions in our government with greater importance or responsibility than a lifetime appointment on the Nation's highest Court. It is now our job to carefully, thoroughly, and methodically review the record of Judge Brett Kavanaugh, and we have quite a job ahead of us.

As a partisan political lawyer during the Clinton and Bush years, Brett Kavanaugh has a paper trail a mile long. There is no doubt the White House and Leader MCCONNELL were

aware of this history when the nomination was made. The length of Judge Kavanaugh's record, however, is no reason to shirk our responsibility as Senators to review it.

Yet the distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee has already suggested there is no reason to review Judge Kavanaugh's full record before proceeding with his nomination. Leader MCCONNELL threatened to play political hardball if Democrats insisted on obtaining Judge Kavanaugh's full record. Senate Republicans are making hollow arguments and petty attempts at advancing Judge Kavanaugh's nomination with as little scrutiny as they can manage.

We have been having trouble getting an agreement with Judiciary Committee Chairman GRASSLEY on the scope of the documents the Senate should request. Chairman GRASSLEY has had our request for over a week. It is the same request that was made when Elena Kagan was nominated to the Supreme Court. It is the very same request that Republicans insisted on, including Senator GRASSLEY—he was not chairman then—and Democrats agreed to when we were in charge.

Much like Judge Kavanaugh, Elena Kagan spent time in prior administrations and had a lengthy paper trail, some of which could have been labeled privileged. Did Democrats, in the majority at the time, attempt to rush her nomination through? No. Did we lean on former administrations to declare her documents privileged? No. Democrats actually joined with the Republican minority to request a full and complete accounting of Elena Kagan's record. Her former employer waived all claims of privilege.

Let me show you the letter right here that my friend Senator LEAHY, then chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and Senator Jeff Sessions, then ranking member, sent to the Clinton Library. Here is the letter. What we have done is use the same letter. We are willing to issue the exact same letter, except we have put the address of the person at the Bush Library, changed the name of Kagan to Kavanaugh, and changed the name of Clinton to Bush; otherwise, it is the exact same letter.

How can our Republican colleagues resist this simple letter when it is the exact same letter they pushed for, and we acceded to, when the shoe was on the other foot?

The letter requests the entirety of Elena Kagan's record, not part of it, not a subset of it—all of it. What is good enough for Justice Kagan is good enough for Judge Kavanaugh. You could simply replace her name with Judge Kavanaugh's name throughout this letter, and the letter would be exactly applicable today. This is the standard Democrats and Republicans used to agree on, the Kagan standard—and it wasn't just Senators LEAHY and Sessions.

At the time, Senator GRASSLEY, now chairman—the burden is on him to help

us get a bipartisan letter—said: “In order for the Senate to fulfill its constitutional duty of advise and consent, we must get all of [Elena Kagan’s] documents from the Clinton Library and have enough time to analyze them so we can determine whether she should be a Justice.”

Let me read it again. This is what Chairman GRASSLEY said—now chairman, then a member of the Judiciary Committee: “In order for the Senate to fulfill its constitutional duty of advise and consent, we must get all of [Elena Kagan’s] documents from the Clinton Library and have enough time to analyze them so we can determine whether she should be a Justice.”

Senator GRASSLEY is a good man. Senator GRASSLEY has a real sense of integrity and fairness. That is why so many of us are wondering why there is such a double standard right now. We hope he will join Senator FEINSTEIN in a joint letter, just as Senator LEAHY and Senator Sessions came together on such a letter a while ago.

Senator CORNYN at the time, now the No. 2 man in the Republican hierarchy here in the Senate, said: “I think it would be a mistake to hold the hearing until we’ve had a chance to see [Elena Kagan’s] documents and any other documents that might exist . . . [and] we’ve had an adequate time to review the documents.”

This happens especially when it comes to judges. The double standard of the other side is enormous. When they are in the minority, they profess strong arguments, push us to go along, and usually we do. But now that they are in the majority, it is as if there is a whole new world and what happened in the past doesn’t make a darn bit of difference. That is not fair. That is not right.

We, on this side, have had enough of the other side’s hypocrisy on judges. We know there is a push by the hard right to fill the bench so they can achieve their agenda, which they could never achieve—even with Republican majorities in the House, Senate, and Presidency—through the elected bodies.

The kinds of attitudes that we have seen by the conservative Justices—which we believe Judge Kavanaugh might well accede to, and that is why we want a hearing—are not what America wants on issue after issue after issue. This is the hard right’s No. 1 goal.

They embraced Donald Trump only after he agreed to a list of 25 judges that the Federalist Society and Heritage Foundation suggested; both are far away from where Americans feel on issues like healthcare, government involvement, and choice. That is when they embraced him.

There is huge pressure; I get that. We have pressure on our side too. But the double standard is so glaring, so unfair, that it is appalling.

People say: Well, on judges, it has been tit for tat. It really hasn’t. It

really hasn’t. Leader Reid changed the rules after four vacancies existed on the DC Court of Appeals because Republicans wouldn’t put them in. It was a 60-vote rule, but we kept it open for the Supreme Court. Leader MCCONNELL changed that. Leader MCCONNELL, unprecedentedly, let Merrick Garland stew and not have a hearing.

We understand the pressure, but it is not good for the Republicans, and it is not good for comity in this body, which we are seeking. I see the chairman of the Appropriations Committee. We are trying to get comity on appropriations. Stuff like this poisons the well. It does.

Just last week, we witnessed the firsthand importance of reviewing a nominee’s full record. The White House was forced to withdraw the nomination of Ryan Bounds for a seat on the Ninth Circuit after abhorrent writings from his college newspaper came to light. If the college newspaper writings of a potential appellate judge are significant enough to disqualify him from consideration, how can my colleagues on the other side argue with a straight face that Judge Kavanaugh’s record should not be fully considered before the Senate moves forward on his nomination to this Nation’s highest Court—one of the most powerful institutions in the world?

There is a lot we don’t know about Judge Kavanaugh. We are learning more about him each day. Just a few days ago, for example, we learned he had expressed skepticism about the Supreme Court that held President Nixon accountable. It is another example of Judge Kavanaugh expressing the view that Presidential power should be virtually unconstrained. One that is still amazing to me, and I would like to see if there is more of it in his records because it is so extreme a view, is that Judge Kavanaugh suggested a President can ignore a statute he “deems”—his word—unconstitutional even if a court ruled it was constitutional. That is like a King, not a President. We have the rule of law here.

He said sitting Presidents should not be subject to an investigation of any kind, other than an impeachment inquiry by Congress.

Judge Kavanaugh’s belief in unchallenged Presidential power is so ingrained that he has even questioned the constitutionality of what he calls the “independent regulatory state,” a phrase that sounds awfully familiar to the hard-right myth of a deep state.

This is a radically activist view for a judge who advertises himself as someone who will merely interpret the law as written. Congress has, by law, given certain agencies varying degrees of independence from the Executive. That started in the 1890s. That is not new, and there is an ebb and flow to it. Sometimes Congress feels the regulations have gone too far and push back; sometimes they feel they need more, and they push forward. There has been an ebb and flow in history since the 1890s, but almost no one has said—ex-

cept the hard right and deep state people—that there shouldn’t be regulations.

If Judge Kavanaugh has his way, agencies that have been somewhat independent with good success, such as the Social Security Administration, the SEC, the IRS, and the FBI, would be subject to vast political influence from the White House. That is exactly the opposite of what Congress has provided by law.

Senators and the public will have to make up their minds about what Judge Kavanaugh believes, and they will have to think of it in the broad, long-term context but also in the context of this President, who seems to have less respect for the rule of law, less respect for separation of power, and less respect for anyone who stands in his way than any President I have seen in my lifetime.

Everyone will have to make up their minds about that. I understand that. That is what we are here for, but it seems clear that in the context of Judge Kavanaugh’s writings about the Presidency, that the statement questioning the Nixon decision reflects his actual beliefs. That is why we need to obtain, analyze, and scrutinize his record. That is our job as U.S. Senators, a job Members from both sides of the aisle used to agree on.

THE PRESIDENT’S FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, just a few points as I see my colleagues are waiting. I wish to make a few points on Iran and President Trump’s tweets. First, it seems the President is desperate to distract the American people from last week’s performance in Helsinki. He always seems to do this: He runs into trouble, and he creates a whole new firestorm somewhere else. It is his MO. It is not the way we have seen government work in the United States, but that is what he does. He is the President.

Second, the tweets suggest a pattern in President Trump’s foreign policy in which the President uses heated rhetoric with foreign capitals to inflame and intensify tensions so later on the President can pretend to ride in and save the day with a more measured tone. It is sort of like a Kabuki play. It screws up our foreign policy.

We saw this play out in North Korea. President Trump repeatedly insulted Kim Jong Un on Twitter, only to declare world peace once the two of them had met. It seems as if the President’s foreign policy is to commit arson so he can play the firefighter. He lights the fire and then puts it out and gives himself a huge pat on the back.

Not surprisingly, this reality TV foreign policy hasn’t produced the concrete results we are all looking for and must secure. It has been 2 months since the President met with Chairman Kim. Yet we have seen little in the way of irreversible steps toward

denuclearization. We don't even have details on the agreement. Secretary Pompeo went over there and was just given the cold shoulder. Kim wouldn't meet with him and said nasty things about him. Still, the President claims—I think he is alone here—that the North Korean summit was a huge success.

Certainly, the world is a safer place without President Trump and Chairman Kim trading barbs on social media. Those tactics make America weaker. We all want diplomacy to succeed. We all want a strong deal with North Korea, but the cessation of rhetorical hostilities is no replacement for concrete, verifiable steps toward denuclearization.

The same holds true for Iran. I hope the President isn't reaching into the same old social media playbook, using rhetoric as a replacement for the hard work of diplomacy.

I yield the floor.

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, FINANCIAL SERVICES, AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 6147, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6147) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Shelby amendment No. 3399, in the nature of a substitute.

Murkowski amendment No. 3400 (to amend amendment No. 3399), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, this week the Senate takes another step toward regular order in the appropriations process in the Senate.

The package before the Senate today contains the fiscal year 2019 appropriations bills for the Subcommittees on Interior; Financial Services; Agriculture; and Transportation, Housing and Urban Development. We have not debated an interior appropriations bill on the floor of the U.S. Senate in nearly 10 years.

The Financial Services appropriations bill has not seen floor action in several years either. Why? Because year after year, party-line votes in committees represented the end of the line in the legislative process. Yet here we are today debating both of these appropriations bills and more on the Senate floor.

So what changed? What changed was the mindset of appropriators on both sides of the aisle who embraced a willingness to sacrifice partisan riders and priorities outside the committee's jurisdiction for the good of the process. Together we have committed to do

what is good for the process because we want to do what is right by the American people.

This approach is yielding meaningful results thus far. The Interior and Financial Services bills in this package both won the unanimous approval of the Appropriations Committee, which is generally unheard of—unanimous, Madam President. We haven't seen that level of support for these bills in quite some time around here.

The Agriculture and Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bills also garnered unanimous support of the Appropriations Committee.

I want to take a minute to commend the chairmen of these subcommittees—Senator MURKOWSKI, Senator COLLINS, Senator HOEVEN, and Senator LANKFORD—for their leadership in the process. I also, again, thank Vice Chairman LEAHY and the ranking members of these subcommittees for their hard work. These Senators have worked together to produce strong and, I believe, bipartisan bills.

This broad bipartisan support paved the way for the full Senate's consideration of these bills, and I thank Leaders MCCONNELL and SCHUMER for agreeing to bring this package to the floor.

As we begin debate this week, we can leverage our recent success in passing appropriations bills. Just last month, the Senate passed a package of three fiscal year 2019 appropriations bills with overwhelming support. This support was facilitated by an open amendment process and a willingness to work together to address legitimate Member concerns. As a result, the process was both open and, I believe, disciplined.

More importantly, it was successful, passing by a vote of 86 to 5—yes, 86 to 5.

The bill managers on both sides of the aisle will seek to replicate this process and success with the package now before the Senate. We ask for the continued cooperation of all Senators in this effort.

Critical mass, that is what we are building in the Senate—critical mass for returning to regular order in the appropriations process.

By completing our work in a deliberate and timely manner on this package, we can turn next to the Defense and Labor-HHS-Education package. While completion of our work on the current package will mean we have passed more than half of the 2019 appropriations bills, the lion's share of discretionary spending, as my colleagues know, is contained in the Defense and Labor-HHS bills. That is very important to all of us here, very important to our constituents, and very important to our country.

Again, I encourage our colleagues to participate in this process and help sustain the momentum we have generated thus far. We have a lot of work to do, but we are making real progress. I hope my colleagues find this encouraging. I certainly do.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I am pleased to join my friend, the senior Senator from Alabama, Chairman SHELBY, as we prepare to debate the second set of appropriations bills to reach the Senate floor this session. Senator SHELBY has noted that this is a change in recent years. I commend him, and I commend both Republicans and Democrats who have worked together in the way we used to and now are again. This minibus contains four important bills for fiscal year 2019: the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies bill; the Financial Services and General Government bill; the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies bill; and the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development and Related Agencies bills.

Now, that was something significant to be on the Senate floor in past years. What is even more significant—and Chairman SHELBY would agree with me—each of these bills was reported by the Appropriations Committee unanimously. Every Republican, every Democrat voted for them. They fund programs that provide important services to the American people across the country. They invest in the future of this country.

Let me take one example, the Agriculture appropriations bill. This bill is a win for farmers, for families, and for rural communities through its investments in rural development, housing, food, nutrition, agriculture, research, and clean water programs. Every State in this Nation—yours, Chairman SHELBY's, and everybody else's, and of course my own State of Vermont—has rural communities and farm economies that benefit from these important programs, every one of us does.

The Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development bill will make critical infrastructure investments across the country and, of course, also in my home State of Vermont. It includes \$10 billion in new funds—new funds—to help address our crumbling bridges and railways and roads. Let me just say, if I might be parochial for a moment, what that means in Vermont. It will help invest in safety improvements on Amtrak's Vermonter and Ethan Allen lines but also will make much needed repairs to our railroads and bridges. These increases in every one of our States are a direct result of the bipartisan budget deal reached earlier this year, and they are critically needed.

I have been here for over 40 years. What Senator SHELBY and I have done is we have brought the Senate back to the way it used to be to actually get things done with Republicans and Democrats working together.

Improving the Nation's infrastructure was one of President Trump's key campaign promises. Unfortunately, he criticized the very budget deal that made these increases possible. He proposed cutting—not increasing—funding

for infrastructure programs that this bill supports. I am glad to say, again, that Republicans and Democrats came together on appropriations and took a different path. This bill also protects key investments in affordable housing and community development programs, such as HOME and CDBG. That is crucial funding that communities leverage to construct, rehabilitate, and maintain affordable housing. This is housing that is desperately needed across America—certainly in my State of Vermont—to shelter families, but it also promotes economic mobility and stability.

The Interior bill makes critical investments in programs to help ensure we have clean water to drink and clean air to breathe. I can't think of any State in the country that doesn't want clean water and doesn't want clean air.

It also supports important conservation programs, including support for our national parks. Our national parks attract millions of visitors each year. What a treasure, allowing families to come and see such an important part of America. I think it is quite in the tradition of Teddy Roosevelt and others who had supported such parks, but it also has the Forest Legacy Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is going to be beneficial for Vermont, New York, and, truly, the whole northeast region. The bill continues our commitment to regional efforts to protect, restore, and preserve Lake Champlain, the largest body of fresh water in the United States outside of the Great Lakes.

I am pleased to report that the committee rejected the misguided cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency proposed by the administration that would have set back the progress we have made in recent decades to preserve our environment not just for ourselves but for future generations.

Finally, the Financial Services bill helps to support small businesses and local economies through the Small Business Development Centers Program and other related programs. Every one of us knows that small businesses and local economies make up the strength of our States.

It also funds regulatory agencies that U.S. citizens rely on to protect them from unfair, unsafe, or fraudulent business practices, like the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Federal Trade Commission, which protect consumers. Yet we were able to reach consent to consider such a broad package of bills in the Senate.

This is a broad cross section of issues, and every one of us had different views. With the vast array of issues here, every one of the 100 Senators here, if writing this legislation by himself or herself, may include something different or something else, and, then, of course, we would have nothing. Instead, Republicans and Democrats came together. I think a lot of this comes from the direct result of

the Shelby-Leahy-McConnell-Schumer commitment to move forward on a bipartisan basis.

Senator SHELBY and I met with the two leaders and said we wanted to do that. We wanted to actually show the Nation that the Senate can work, and we did it at spending levels agreed to in the bipartisan budget deal. We rejected new poison pill riders from the right and the left or controversial authorizing legislation.

We will all have issues about which we care deeply, but we had to come together on what is in the best interests of the country, and, frankly, as a Senator for almost 44 years, it was in the best interests of the Senate.

I think Senator SHELBY would agree with me that achieving this goal of reporting strong, bipartisan bills took considerable restraint on both sides of the aisle, but that restraint is what is required to get these bills through the Senate. But I worry that the House is proceeding on a different path. They have passed partisan bills filled with poison pill riders that cannot and will not pass the Senate.

Funding the government is one of our most basic constitutional responsibilities. If you go across this country, you will find that the American people expect us to work together. They expect us to reach across the aisle and to reach agreement on these bills. The programs funded in these bills make a real difference in the American people's lives, and they shouldn't be held hostage to unrelated partisan policy fights. So I hope that when we get to conference on these bills, the House will reverse and do their work in a bipartisan fashion for the benefit of all Americans—not just Republicans, not just Democrats, but all Americans.

I especially want to thank Chairman SHELBY for his partnership on these bills. I also thank the chairs and ranking members of each of the subcommittees. If they hadn't been willing to work and cooperate together, we wouldn't have these four bills before us. Again, I note that they went through unanimously. We had reached a point where some thought that we couldn't get unanimous agreement in the Senate that the sun rises in the east. Maybe we couldn't, but we did get unanimous agreement here, and thank goodness.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I am pleased to begin the Senate debate on the fiscal year 2019 appropriations bill for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies. Our bill has been included in the appropriations package now before this Chamber.

Let me begin my remarks this morning by thanking Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY for their leadership in advancing these appropriations bills in record time. It is great to see the Senate getting back to regular

order in moving the appropriations bills across the Senate floor, allowing for robust debate and amendment, and then bringing those bills to conference with our House counterparts. That is the way the system should work, as opposed to all of these bills being bundled together in an enormous, many thousand-page omnibus appropriations bill. I am very pleased to see the progress that we are making.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of my friend and colleague Senator JACK REED, who serves as the ranking member of the T-HUD Subcommittee. I have worked very closely with Senator REED in drafting this bill. We have also received input from more than 70 Senators, with in excess of 800 requests, each of which we very carefully evaluated. So I can assure this Chamber that this legislation is truly bipartisan.

The T-HUD bill provides \$71.4 billion for our Nation's critical infrastructure and housing programs. This bill continues the significant infrastructure investments provided in fiscal year 2018 for our Nation's highways, bridges, airports, transit, and rail networks. As a result, communities across this country will be able to improve their transportation infrastructure to enable more efficient and safer movement of people and goods. Improving our infrastructure is essential for our continued economic growth as well as for personal mobility.

The fiscal year 2019 T-HUD bill continues the increases for infrastructure programs resulting from the 2-year budget agreement that was reached by Congress and the administration. I would note, however, that the budget agreement does not provide for the long-term funding structure necessary for our Nation's transportation infrastructure. I want to strongly encourage the administration to work with the authorizing committees to provide that long-term, sustainable funding for transportation before the FAST Act expires at the end of fiscal year 2020.

Our bill provides \$1 billion for BUILD grants, previously known as the popular TIGER grants program. These grants have supported not only much needed infrastructure projects but also jobs and economic growth in each and every one of our home States. I want to provide my colleagues with an indication of just how popular this program is and how strong the demand is.

In the 2017 round of TIGER grant applications, the Department of Transportation received 452 applications requesting more than \$6 billion, well above the \$500 million provided last year, which could fund only 41 projects. You can see that the demand far exceeds the amount of funding. So we are taking action in this bill to double the funding for BUILD grants. That will help many more projects become a reality. I have seen in my own State the investments in bridges, ports, and transportation projects that have made such a difference.

I would now like to turn to the aviation provisions in our bill. We provide \$17.7 billion in budgetary resources for the Federal Aviation Administration, or the FAA, which fully funds air traffic control personnel, including more than 14,000 air traffic controllers and more than 25,000 engineers, maintenance technicians, safety inspectors, and operational support personnel. The bill also provides \$1 billion for the FAA Next Generation Air Transportation Systems Program, also known as NextGen, and \$168 million for the popular Contract Towers Program. The NextGen Program is so important to the modernization of our air traffic control system, and we have consistently funded that program, and it is being implemented in a way that is going to make a real difference.

Consistent with the FAST Act, \$46 billion is made available for the Federal-Aid Highway Program from the highway trust fund. In addition, the bill provides \$3.3 billion from the general fund for our Nation's highways, of which \$800 million is for bridge replacement and rehabilitation in rural areas of our country.

The American Society of Civil Engineers conducts a comprehensive assessment of our Nation's infrastructure every 4 years. Its most recent report card from 2017 shows that America's infrastructure remains poor and in desperate need of investment. In fact, the engineers award a grade of only D-plus for our Nation's infrastructure.

To give you some statistics to emphasize why we are receiving such a low grade, let me talk about our Nation's bridges. One in nine of our Nation's bridges is rated as structurally deficient, and the average age of our country's more than 600,000 bridges is 42 years old. Our national highway system contains infrastructure that is now well past its useful life. Some bridges are more than 100 years old, and many are unable to accommodate today's traffic volumes.

I was recently in Piscataquis County, where a TIGER Grant Program was allowing the replacement of some very old rural bridges. The amount of rust on these bridges and the narrow width made them extraordinarily dangerous. They were at risk of being posted so that traffic could go across only in one direction. When you looked up at the trusses, you could see where trucks loaded with lumber had dented the trusses because they were far too low. They were built for a different era. It is important for safety reasons—as we have seen with bridges collapsing in this country or having to be posted—that we make this kind of investment.

Our bill also invests in our Nation's rail infrastructure by providing \$2.8 billion for the Federal Railroad Administration. This includes \$1.9 billion to Amtrak for the Northeast Corridor and National Network, continuing service for all current routes.

In May, our subcommittee held a hearing in response to serious rail acci-

dents, such as the tragic derailment last December in Washington State. Our bill continues to fund positive train control implementation to improve the safety of our trains. In addition, the bill provides \$255 million for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Grants Program and \$300 million for the Federal-State partnership for the State of Good Repair Grants Program. These investments in rail will help ensure that both passengers and freight move more safely and efficiently throughout our country.

The State maritime academies play a critical role in training the next generation of U.S. mariners. Our bill provides \$40 million for the maritime academies as well as an additional \$300 million for a special purpose vessel to be used as a training school ship.

In accordance with MARAD's guidance, the new training ships will go to replace existing training ships in the order in which these ships are expected to reach the end of their useful life. That is the only logical way for us to proceed.

Last year, we appropriated funds to replace the 57-year-old ship used by the New York State maritime academy, and this year's funding will go to replace the Massachusetts Maritime Academy's aging vessel. Again, we are going in the order that the Maritime Administration tells us these ships will be at the end of their useful life.

It would be great to be able to replace all of the ships at the same time, but we simply can't afford to do that, and that is where prioritizing the ships as the agency recommends comes in. Replacing these ships is, however, important to providing training capacity for all six of the State maritime academies, including the one that I am very proud of, the Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, Maine. It will ensure that cadets receive the training hours they need to graduate on time and join the workforce.

In the area of housing, our priority is to ensure that our Nation's most vulnerable families and individuals do not lose the assistance they are now receiving, which prevents many of them from being at risk of homelessness. Therefore, the bill provides the necessary funding to keep pace with the rising costs of housing these families in order to avoid their becoming homeless. Much of the increased funding covers the higher costs of rental assistance for the most vulnerable among us, including our homeless veterans, our youth, our disabled citizens, and low-income seniors.

Senator REED and I share a strong commitment to reducing, and someday ending, homelessness. We have therefore included \$2.6 billion for homeless assistance grants. We have also made critical investments to reduce homelessness among our veterans, our youth, and survivors of domestic violence. Specifically, to assist our homeless youth, we have provided \$80 mil-

lion for grants targeting this underserved population.

I visited a wonderful youth shelter in Lewiston, ME, called New Beginnings. I was so impressed with the work they were doing with teenagers, in particular, many of whom had been exiled from their homes—as much as I hate to say it—or abused or otherwise found themselves homeless. Because of the safety of this shelter, they were continuing their schooling, they were learning life skills, and they were safe. Yet, I will tell you, this is the only shelter in the State of Maine that is devoted solely to the needs of homeless youth.

There is such a need in this country. There are other shelters that try to accommodate young people in the State of Maine and are doing their best, but this is an area where we need to provide more assistance.

To better support youth who are exiting the foster care system, the bill includes \$20 million for family unification vouchers. That is the real gap in our system. What happens—and I know that many Members share my concern—is young people “age out” of the foster care program, and they may have nowhere safe to go.

For our Nation's senior population, many of our seniors receive section 8 housing, but our bill also includes \$678 million for housing for older Americans. Of this amount, \$10 million will provide grants to nonprofit and State and local entities to do home modifications for low-income seniors, enabling them to stay in their own homes and to age in place.

I am very excited about this program because of hearings I have held in the Senate Aging Committee, which I am privileged to chair. What we have learned is, oftentimes, upgrading and putting grab bars in a bathroom, widening door openings, putting sensors on the refrigerator door—doing modifications like that can allow our seniors to stay where they want to be, in the comfort, security, and privacy of their own homes. Not only will these low-cost home modifications enable seniors to remain in their homes, but they also reduce the need for more costly nursing homes and other assisted housing options.

For our Nation's homeless veterans, the bill provides \$45 million for the highly successful HUD-VASH Program, including \$5 million to serve our Native American veterans living on Tribal lands. Despite the administration, once again, proposing to eliminate this effective program, the subcommittee continues to provide adequate funding.

This program is a real success story. Since we initiated it in 2010, veterans homelessness has fallen by 46 percent. Let's continue our work to reach the goal of ending homelessness altogether among our veterans.

Another important issue—and a passion of our ranking member, Senator REED, and I—that is addressed by the bill is lead paint in homes, which is of

particular concern to families with children under the age of 6. Our bill provides \$260 million to combat lead hazards. These grants will help communities protect children from the harmful effects of lead poisoning.

Again, I have seen this in my home State. Lewiston, ME, our second largest city, has very old housing stock, and it has a great deal of lead paint. Grants are helping this city deal with this problem, thus improving the health and safety of pregnant women and young children and avoiding disability and developmental problems for those young children.

These grants will help communities across America protect children from the harmful effects of lead poisoning. While our bill certainly helps vulnerable families, it also recognizes the challenges facing local communities. Boosting local communities is critical to job creation and helping our community neighborhoods thrive and our families obtain financial security.

The bill supports local development efforts by providing \$3.3 billion through the Community Development Block Grant Program. That is one of the most popular programs we provide. If you talk to any mayor or town council, they will tell you how flexible the CDBG Program is and how, as the mayor in Maine with whom I recently met told me, it helps them customize the funding to meet the program needs of their communities. It may be infrastructure. It may be affordable housing. It may be sprucing up the downtown. It may be supporting local businesses. This is a great program. It is not a Washington dictated program. It is one that responds to local needs.

We also provide \$1.4 billion for the HOME Program. The CDBG and the HOME Program support the development of infrastructure projects, community development, affordable housing, economic development, and job creation.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this legislation to the Chamber. As we begin debate on the Transportation-HUD bill, I urge my colleagues to support the investments in this bill, which will pay dividends to our communities, our veterans, our children, our low-income families, and our seniors. Our bill was unanimously reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee. We are certainly open for business for amendments.

I commend my friend and colleague Senator REED for his hard work and for that of our staffs on both sides of the aisle in crafting this bill.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise in support of H.R. 6147, the so-called appropriations "minibus," which includes the fiscal year 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, as well as three other bills.

I am certainly proud to have worked with Chairman COLLINS. She has put together a thoughtful, bipartisan T-HUD Appropriations bill that reflects the priorities of more than 70 Senators, who provided more than 800 funding or language recommendations. Her leadership and her commitment to fairness and to ensuring that all of our colleagues had the opportunity to help make investments in their States are remarkable and deeply appreciated.

We looked at all of our colleagues' suggestions and recommendations. We also received guidance from Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY, and I appreciate their creative and constructive role. As a result, we were able to produce legislation I am remarkably proud of, and I again thank the chairman for her great work.

The bill does not include any poison pill riders, which follows the principle established by Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY.

This agreement has given the committee space to evaluate the requests of the administration and Congress and to provide funding levels that support national priorities. I strongly urge my colleagues to maintain this effort and not get diverted by very peripheral and narrow interests in the form of what is frequently referred to as "poison pills."

Having said that, as the chairman indicated, we welcome amendments and encourage Senators to file them as soon as possible so we can begin to work through them. We have already heard from a few colleagues, and we have several amendments we are preparing to move forward.

Substantively, let me share some of the significant accomplishments in this year's T-HUD bill. Consistent with the budget agreement, the bill includes \$10.9 billion in budgetary resources above fiscal year 2017 levels to improve our Nation's infrastructure, grow our economy, and spur job creation.

The bills include \$3.3 billion above the levels provided in the FAST Act for highway programs, including \$800 million for a bridge repair and replacement program.

On rail and transit, we have maintained Amtrak's funding level from fiscal year 2018, including \$650 million for the Northeast Corridor, to make meaningful state of good repair and safety improvements. We have also fully funded the need for Capital Investment Grants and have increased transit formula and competitive grant programs above FAST Act levels. These modes of transportation are essential to reducing congestion, driving economic growth, and improving quality of life throughout the country.

I am also pleased that we have a bill before us that protects rental assistance for more than 5 million low-income individuals and families, over half of whom are elderly or disabled, and rejects the administration's harmful proposals to increase rent burdens and work requirements for many of our assisted households, who are already struggling to make ends meet.

The bill also provides \$285 million for programs that remediate lead-based paint hazards in low-income and assisted housing. This includes \$25 million to address lead-based paint hazards in public housing and \$45 million for a new Lead Safe Communities Demonstration Program, which has the potential to reduce the cost of remediating lead-based paint hazards in homes.

For our Nation's seniors, the bill includes more than \$50 million to develop new senior housing and \$10 million to modify low-income seniors' homes to make them more accessible. In Rhode Island—and we are not unique—nearly half of our senior households lack an affordable housing option. This funding will be used to develop innovative housing strategies and ensure that our Nation's seniors are able to remain in their communities. It is remarkable. Half of our seniors are without affordable housing, and that number is only going to grow as the demographics of this country continue on their present course.

Again, in terms of housing, let me single out an issue where the chairman has been extraordinarily not only conscientious but also courageous. That is homelessness among youth, veterans, and survivors of domestic violence. Chairman COLLINS has done remarkable work. She has been building on the work we did together on the HEARTH Act to develop innovative, targeted ways to comprehensively address homelessness nationally. I am pleased we are able to include more than \$2.6 billion in assistance for communities to continue to provide emergency and community-driven solutions to prevent and end homelessness.

Let me also say a few words about the other bills that are part of this minibuss package—the Agriculture Appropriations bill, the Interior Appropriations bill, and the Financial Services-General Government Appropriations bill. Each of these bills includes important funding for key programs, and each has steered away from the kind of controversial legislative provisions that would prevent them from moving to the floor.

I am pleased the Agriculture bill includes critical funding for nutrition, conservation, and research, including additional funding to help foster the growth of shellfish aquaculture.

The Interior bill continues to make important investments in infrastructure through the State Revolving Loan Fund programs for clean water and drinking water, which Senator CRAPO and I have championed on a bipartisan basis for many years.

The bill highlights the need to establish a maximum contaminant level for PFAS, a category of chemicals that has been used in a wide variety of products, including firefighting foam. Frankly, as Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee, I have been told of numerous military facilities across the country where this firefighting foam has been used for 30 or 40

years, and now we are beginning to recognize the potential environmental effects. Dealing with this issue now, or beginning to deal with it, is a very thoughtful approach.

In addition to providing critical dollars for our national parks, wildlife refuges, and cultural institutions, this bill also funds the Southeast New England Program for Coastal Watershed Restoration to support collaborative and science-based projects that improve the health of Narragansett Bay and other coastal watersheds in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

Finally, the Financial Services-General Government bill makes important investments in our leading financial regulators—the SEC and the CFTC—as well as provides funding for the Community Development Financial Institutions program, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program, and the SBA's State Trade Expansion Promotion program.

I commend the chair and ranking member of each of these subcommittees for their hard work on these bills.

Before I conclude, I note that these smart investments and well-crafted bills would not have been possible without the passage of the 2-year Bipartisan Budget Act, which provided much needed relief from sequester-level budget caps, but that is only a 2-year deal, which expires at the end of fiscal year 2019. With the return of harmful sequester cuts looming in 2020, this bill should serve as a reminder of why we must pursue another bipartisan agreement to provide relief on both the defense and nondefense sides of the ledger. Without such a deal, we will not be able to continue our infrastructure and other investments that make a positive difference in communities across America.

Again, let me conclude by thanking, recognizing, and deeply appreciating the chairman for her extraordinary vision and her commitment to those values and those issues that are remarkably demonstrated in this bill: affordable housing for seniors, assistance for the homeless, and ensuring that we have money for infrastructure.

This bill shows a remarkable commitment to infrastructure across the country. When the President was campaigning, he talked about a trillion-dollar infrastructure bill. That has not materialized. What has materialized is robust funding for infrastructure in this bill, and that is a direct contribution of the chairman.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce the fiscal year 2019 appropriations bill for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. I am glad we are considering appropriations bills on the floor in a manner that allows us to fully debate amendments.

I am pleased also to join my colleagues from the Subcommittees on In-

terior; Transportation, Housing and Urban Development; and also Financial Services in putting together this legislation.

For now, I am going to limit my comments to the ag provisions. I will defer to my colleagues on their provisions, but I look forward to our partnership in moving these bills across the floor.

The activities funded by the Agriculture bill touch the lives of every American every day. I like to talk about how important good farm policy is because good farm policy benefits every single American every single day with the highest quality, lowest cost food supply.

As we move this Agriculture appropriations bill, that is what it is about. It is about our farmers and ranchers, no doubt about that, but it is something that benefits every single American every single day.

These activities include ag research, conservation activities, housing and business loan programs for rural communities, domestic and international nutrition programs, and food safety and drug safety.

Funding for each of these deserves thorough and thoughtful consideration. The subcommittee has made difficult decisions in drafting this bill. We had to choose and we had to prioritize in terms of putting this legislation together, but I think we brought forward a bill that works. It is one that got broad-based bipartisan support from the Appropriations Committee.

It is written to our allocation of just over \$23 billion. That is about \$200 million above the current enacted level. We worked hard to invest taxpayer dollars responsibly, funding programs that provide direct benefits to our farmers, our ranchers, and rural communities, supporting programs that provide direct health and safety benefits, again, to every single American every single day.

Ag supports more than 16 million jobs nationwide. It forms the backbone of our rural communities. Our agricultural producers are the best in the world at what they do, and we have to work hard to give them a level playing field because they produce food, fuel, and fiber for this country but also for countries around the world. We really do feed the world, so we need access to those markets to do so.

This is, of course, in part, the result of smart investment in America's ag research infrastructure, something that truly helps our farmers and ranchers, our producers do what they do every day. Ag research helps us do it better, more cost-effectively, with higher quality, and more productivity.

That is why I am pleased this bill puts significant emphasis on maintaining research programs at our land-grant schools, colleges and universities, across this Nation and funding for competitive research programs such as the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.

These programs are critical to helping our farmers increase production, and they expand our Nation's economic growth. As I say, they feed not only this country but really the world. Not only does every dollar spent on ag research result in a \$20 return on investment to the U.S. economy, research investment also results in a food supply that is safe, abundant, and affordable.

I am also glad the agriculture bill prioritizes funding for rural infrastructure. Included is \$425 million for rural broadband grants and loans, putting our 2-year investment in rural broadband at over \$1 billion. Through fiscal year 2018-fiscal year 2019, we will put over a billion dollars into rural broadband, making sure all Americans, wherever they may live—whether they are in an urban area or out in the most rural part of our country—have the opportunity to access the world wide web and be part of the innovation and technology that goes with it. With this funding, we will make tremendous strides in bridging the digital divide in urban and rural communities.

Broadband availability remains a challenge for States like mine, a rural State, and other rural States. Farmers need access to new precision technologies to help their operations run more efficiently. It is also essential for rural communities to have sufficient broadband if they hope to attract new businesses and grow their local economies. I am proud to say that we put funding in this bill to help to do just that.

I thank Senator MERKLEY, our ranking member, for the bipartisan working relationship that we have on the Agriculture Subcommittee. I also want to applaud and express my appreciation to Chairman SHELBY for working to return our Appropriations Committee to regular order. I think this ag bill that we are presenting today reflects a well-balanced compromise, and it illustrates that the Senate can work together on important issues like this one.

I certainly hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting this legislation. With that, I turn to our ranking member, Senator MERKLEY.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, I rise today to discuss the Agriculture appropriations bill. This is a good bill that was drafted in a bipartisan manner and passed out of committee unanimously.

A big thanks goes to Chairman HOEVEN for his hard work on the bill, as well to members of his team who worked closely with members of my team throughout this process and considered requests and concerns from Senators on both sides of the aisle.

In his budget request, President Trump proposed more than a 25-percent cut to USDA's funding. He also zeroed out a number of very important programs, including programs that benefit

rural America, along with research programs and domestic and international nutrition programs. The bill that came out of the Appropriations Committee rejects those devastating cuts that were presented in the President's budget request.

This bill, which is within the subcommittee's discretionary allocation of \$23.2 billion, makes smart, targeted investments in programs that are important to the American people while keeping out controversial policy riders. In this bill we maintain funding for important rural development programs while building on the increases provided last year for rural infrastructure initiatives, including rural water and waste programs and a broadband pilot program. These programs are vital in providing rural communities the ability to support entrepreneurs to be able to grow their businesses, creating much needed jobs in the community.

The bill protects vital research programs and makes important new investments for the organic industry. The Organic Transitions Program is funded at \$6 million. The National Organic Program is funded at \$15 million. The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program is funded at \$37 million. All of these are historic funding levels that demonstrate the commitment to a vital and rapidly growing industry.

What else does this committee bill do?

It supports funding for farm ownership and farm operating loans. With farm incomes on the decline, access to credit is crucial for farmers to stay in business. Farm loans will serve the most disadvantaged in the farming sector, including farmers who are just starting out, as well as ranchers, minorities, women, and veterans.

I am also pleased that we were able to include \$150 million in funding for the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program to protect our watersheds and help to prevent floods, reduce erosion, and protect wildlife habitats. With a backlog of \$850 million for projects that have already been authorized, this funding is much needed.

For domestic nutrition programs, our bill maintains funding for the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children Program, which provides access to food for low-income children during the summer months when schools are out of session. Beyond that, the bill provides for \$30 million for school meal equipment grants, \$18 million for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and \$238 million for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. This bill also protects SNAP, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which 42 million Americans rely on. It does not provide provisions that would eliminate benefits to those who qualify.

On the international front, the bill maintains strong funding for nutrition programs such as Food for Peace and McGovern-Dole. Since its inception,

Food for Peace has reached over 3 billion people in 150 countries and more than 32 million people last year alone.

I have been in the field to see the impact of this program for communities that rely on it in some of the hardest hit parts of the world affected by conflict and climate chaos and corruption. This support is a considerable feature of what people around the world see in terms of the United States reaching out to assistant communities in need worldwide.

Meanwhile, in 2017, the McGovern-Dole Program fed 4.5 million children, and it helps to support education and food security for low-income countries, as well as increasing school attendance. This program supports good health and better education for children around the world, with a particular emphasis on girls. In the state of the world today, we need programs like Food for Peace and McGovern-Dole, which have a proven track record. I am pleased that we have worked in a bipartisan to ensure that these programs are funded.

The bill in front of us supports the important work of the FDA, or the Food and Drug Administration, through a \$159 million increase in the agency's funding. Included in that funding increase, among other things, is full funding for the Oncology Center of Excellence, modernizing the generic drug review process, investment and innovation for rare diseases, and the continuation of last year's work on opioid prevention activities. I know, and my fellow Senators understand, just how important that opioid addiction prevention program is.

TRIBUTE TO JESSICA SCHULKEN

Mr. President, before I conclude, I wish to take a moment to recognize an outstanding member of the Agriculture Subcommittee team.

Jessica Schulken will be leaving us in the next few weeks after almost 19 years on the Appropriations Committee. Her accomplishments are numerous. During her years on the committee, she has been a tireless advocate for our Nation's farmers and ranchers, a fierce protector for rural America, a staunch advocate for ensuring that the Food and Drug Administration has all the resources it needs, and a defender of transparency who has worked hard to ensure that these agencies are answerable to Congress.

I cannot begin to adequately express the tremendous work that she has done on this committee as clerk. I speak for many who know how sorely she will be missed. Here is a big thanks to Jessica Schulken for her years of service and dedication, and I wish her well in her new chapter of life.

The process on this agriculture appropriations subcommittee bill has been emblematic of the type of good, strong bipartisan work that we would like to see much more often here in the Senate—bipartisan work that has assisted our ranchers, bipartisan work to assist our farming communities, bipar-

tisan work to support rural communities and rural infrastructure. So I look forward to getting this bill passed, getting it through conference, and getting it to the Oval Office.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. 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. 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.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill for 2019. As chairman of the subcommittee, I have really enjoyed working with the ranking member, Senator COONS, and all of the members of the Appropriations Committee.

However, for many Members of this Chamber who are not on the Appropriations Committee, today will be their first close look at an appropriations bill from our subcommittee. It has been months in process, with many oversight hearings, a lot of debate, a lot of amendments, a lot of back and forth with a tremendous amount of input from Members of this body, and it is finally actually on the floor.

It has been nearly 7 years since the Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill has actually been considered on the Senate floor. In November of 2011, the Senate began consideration of the combined appropriations package for Energy and Water, Financial Services, and State and Foreign Operations. Unfortunately, the floor consideration of that bill was halted shortly after it began, and Members were not able to offer amendments or have their voices heard. We are looking forward to that changing today.

This week's debate will subject the Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill to public scrutiny and an open amendment process on the Senate floor for the first time since the subcommittee was established in 2007. It is too long in coming. I applaud the leadership of Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY, who were determined to see the committee return to regular order.

A little bit of sunshine will help us in this process. I am a firm believer that openness and transparency result in a better legislative product. It is my hope that today starts a trend where the appropriations bills that are seldom seen outside the committee, such as the Financial Services and Interior appropriations bills, can be debated openly and amended on the Senate floor.

We have made a concerted effort to make responsible decisions in allocating resources and to be responsive

to the requests we have received from Members of both sides of the aisle, and we welcome continued input and proposed amendments from other Members.

This Financial Services and General Government bill totals \$23,688,000,000. It includes funding for a diverse group of 27 different independent agencies. It includes the Executive Office of the President, the Department of the Treasury, the Federal Judiciary, and the District of Columbia. The bill does not include any budget gimmicks or empty CHIMPS, or changes in mandatory program spending, which are often used as a gimmick by appropriations. It does not include those.

The bill provides targeted funding increases for the Treasury Department to combat terrorism financing, for the Federal courts to support their administration of justice, and for the GSA's Federal Buildings Fund, including the acquisition of the headquarters building for the Department of Transportation, rather than continuing to pay \$49.4 million in annual rental payments for a building that is their headquarters. We will move back to actually owning that building to save the taxpayers that money.

This bill also fully funds GSA's request for basic repairs and major repairs. Basic and major repairs are not glamorous appropriations accounts, but they are exceptionally important to maintain and protect the taxpayers' dollars.

The bill also makes critical investments in our Nation's financial markets, by providing targeted increases for the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

After years of flat funding for the CFTC, or the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, including a \$1 million cut last year, this bill provides an increase to the CFTC in recognition of their critical role overseeing our swaps, futures, and options markets. Support for the CFTC was a priority for a number of Senators in this Chamber on both sides of the aisle, and I am pleased that we were able to accommodate it this year.

The bill provides \$11.26 billion to the Internal Revenue Service for the administration of our Nation's tax laws. Of this amount, \$77 million is dedicated to implementing the new Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. That bill has been enormously successful in helping to turn around our economy, wherein our GDP growth has grown exponentially over the last year. Yet we have to fully implement that bill, and the additional \$77 million is dedicated to that.

Aside from tax reform, we are able to provide an increase of \$75 million in base funding for the IRS. This increase to the Operations Support account over the fiscal year 2018 enacted level will provide for investments in information technology infrastructure to reduce reliance on legacy systems. The total amount for the IRS includes \$2.5 billion

for Taxpayer Services and \$4.86 billion for Enforcement.

We have two critical goals for the IRS—improving taxpayers' access to quality customer service and addressing the tax gap, which is the amount owed but actually not paid.

The IRS needs help in the customer service area. It has asked for additional funding, and we have asked it for additional focus on customer service. We have given that this time. We have also asked the IRS to deal with the tax gap, which are taxes owed that individuals do not pay. This is not a change in tax law; it is enforcing existing tax law. Our current tax gap is right at \$400 billion a year. Addressing this tax gap is critical to reducing the deficit and restoring our Nation's fiscal health.

The bill prioritizes the Federal Government's response to the opioid crisis. Our bill keeps our Nation's focus on the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program, with there being \$280 million allocated, and on the Drug-Free Communities Program, with there being \$99 million allocated through the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

The bill provides a funding increase to the U.S. Postal Service Inspector General to address the growing concern of narcotics trafficking through the mail system. We have to pay attention to that. The bill includes \$2 million in new funding for the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency for improvements to the website oversight.gov. If folks have not already gone to oversight.gov to see the work of our inspectors general, I would encourage them to do that if they need some additional help. Their work needs to be highlighted, and we need to actually implement those recommendations.

IGs are on the frontlines of efforts to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government, and their recommendations produce billions of dollars in cost savings. We need to actually see those cost savings and implement them. Oversight.gov has improved the accessibility and prominence of their work, and I am confident this effort will produce even greater savings in the future by maintaining a database of open IG recommendations at oversight.gov.

Again, I thank my friend Senator COONS and express my appreciation for the way he and his staff have worked with us this year.

As this bill moves forward, I look forward to hearing from all of our colleagues about how we can further address their priorities through the amendment process. We look forward to doing something historic—of actually passing an FSGG bill on the floor of the Senate and of working through this process in an open and transparent way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I am proud to join my colleague, Senator

LANKFORD of Oklahoma, in bringing our committee bill—the Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill—to the floor.

I thank the full committee chair and the vice chairman, Senators SHELBY and LEAHY, for their leadership and their bipartisan work that has laid out the process we are now following to make real progress on our appropriations process.

I thank Chairman LANKFORD for working with me on this bill, and to my colleague Senator LANKFORD, of Oklahoma, I express my appreciation for his being a great partner, for our positive experience in working together, and for how much I value our collegial relationship.

I also thank the key staff of this subcommittee—Andy Newton, Lauren Comeau, and Brian Daner—as well as my own staff—Ellen Murray, Diana Hamilton, and Reeves Hart. These six folks are, I think, exemplars of the people who work here year in and year out, week in and week out and who help make it possible for us to craft large and complicated, bipartisan compromise bills like this one. We are grateful for the positive working experience they have had together and for the spirit with which they have worked to make this bill possible.

I am confident this bill fairly allocates funding among many competing priorities, given the subcommittee's allocation and its broad jurisdiction. Senator LANKFORD and I have followed the guidance of the full committee chair and vice chair and have kept this bill free of new controversial riders. Overall, this bill appropriates \$23.688 billion, which is a small increase over that in the fiscal year 2018 omnibus bill that was enacted earlier this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly highlight how this bill will impact both Delawareans, whom I represent, and Americans across our whole country.

The bill provides \$250 million for the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, which supports development in some of America's poorest communities. The President's budget had recommended cutting this vital program down to just \$14 million, which would have completely eliminated any new grant funding, but I am proud this bipartisan Senate bill restores all of the funding for this effective and vital program.

This bill rejects the transfer of two vital anti-drug programs—the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program, known by its acronym HIDTA, and the Drug-Free Communities—from the Office of National Drug Control Policy to the Justice Department.

I am grateful that at this time when opioids are a crisis of academic proportions, which I hear about week in and week out in my home State of Delaware, that we have rejected an ill-conceived proposal to move these programs to other agencies, where I have been concerned they would receive reduced funding and scant attention. I

am pleased, instead, that they will stay with the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

This bill provides \$281.5 million for the CFTC, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. This is an increase of \$32.5 million. It is critical the CFTC is able to keep pace with the dramatic changes in the marketplace as it regulates, particularly with the emergence of cryptocurrencies and complex financial products and international trading platforms. I think it is critical that the CFTC be able to modernize its investments, as this is what it is responsible for.

The Federal judiciary will receive \$7.251 billion in funding, an increase of \$140 million over the fiscal year 2018 enacted level. In particular, the defender services and court security accounts, which I have long been attentive to, will receive robust funding.

This bill vitally increases funding for the basic operations of the Internal Revenue Service. The IRS may not be the most popular of Federal agencies, but it touches almost every American and is central to the legal and appropriate and efficient collection of revenue and for being responsive to constituents and customers. This bill increases funding for the basic operations of the IRS, and it fully funds the request for the cost of implementing the comprehensive new tax law.

I hope we continue to work to increase funding for this vital agency in conference because the IRS has IT systems that are out of date, and customer service can still improve. As the chairman and I have both commented in previous hearings, we need to continue to make progress in closing the \$400 billion tax gap—the gap between what is owed and what is collected in tax revenues every year.

This bill includes \$1.66 billion for the Securities and Exchange Commission, the SEC. Given the number of publicly traded firms that have an incorporation footprint in my home State of Delaware, I am particularly interested in making sure the SEC has the resources it needs and is investing those funds efficiently and effectively, as it is the watchdog that helps to make sure our securities are being exchanged in ways that are transparent and legal and appropriate.

There is a provision within the Department of the Treasury that I want to highlight briefly of \$159 million being appropriated specifically for the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. It is an increase of \$17 million over last year, just over 10 percent. This office has the responsibility of enforcing economic sanctions across the globe.

It also has a very broad and very important responsibility, and it is key that we have been able to work on a bipartisan basis to ensure funding is adequate not only to continue the implementation of sanctions against North Korea and Iran but also to make sure we are fully enforcing the Global

Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act and that we are enforcing sanctions in other places in the world—Africa, for example—where we have longstanding sanctions that need more thorough enforcement.

This bill provides funding for the Small Business Administration—a remarkably effective Federal agency that punches above its weight. This bill rejects the President's proposed cuts to the SBA's grant programs by either restoring or increasing funding to virtually every initiative within the SBA.

These grants are essential to the SBA's mission of supporting small businesses so local communities across our country have greater economic opportunity. I am particularly pleased, within the suite of SBA-related services, to support the SCORE Program, which has one of the highest ratios of volunteers and civic outreach and impact to Federal investment. Groups of volunteers all over the country offer business tools, workshops, and mentoring to dedicated entrepreneurs and small business owners. SCORE was initially founded in my home State of Delaware, in the city of Wilmington. So I have enjoyed working in a bipartisan way to reauthorize it during this Congress.

This bill also includes a well-deserved pay adjustment for Federal civilian workers. Last year, Federal employees received a cost-of-living increase of 1.9 percent. The cost of living is growing at a faster rate than that. So, this year, the bill includes that same level, which, I think, is an important bipartisan compromise to ensure that our civilian workforce receives the support it has earned.

Lastly, we did include, last year, election security grants of about \$380 million in the fiscal year 2018 omnibus to help protect States and their voting systems from cyber attacks. The chairman is the cosponsor of an authorizing bill that is critical we take up and move independent of the appropriations process. I also do think, this year, we should have provided more for appropriations to our States to make sure they are strengthening their cyber security as we are just 4 months from a general election.

In closing, let me again thank the staff members of the subcommittee who worked so well together.

Let me thank Senator LANKFORD, my colleague from Oklahoma, for his great and positive attitude and for his determination in making sure these dollars are spent wisely. We may not agree on everything, but we have been able to agree on this thing, which is significant and historic progress, as the very first ever floor markup of the FSGG bill now begins.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. 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. 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.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this week, we will continue the confirmation process for Judge Brett Kavanaugh, who, as we all know, has been nominated by President Trump to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. I say we will continue the confirmation process because there has already been a questionnaire issued by the Judiciary Committee to which the nominee has responded. I know White House Counsel and others are already trying to put their heads together with the George W. Bush Presidential Library, down in Dallas, as well as with the National Archives, to be responsive to the document requests that have been made for the judge.

As the author of more than 300 published opinions, Judge Kavanaugh is a well-known judicial nominee. I think his experience from the last 12 years on the DC Court of Appeals has clearly demonstrated he has the experience that the job on the Supreme Court requires.

He is also enormously well respected among the legal community. We have seen op-eds written by professors—all of them scholars—who say that Judge Kavanaugh can more than hold his own when it comes to legal analysis. We have heard this from people who share his judicial philosophy and those who do not share his judicial philosophy. They have a broad mutual respect for his intellect and his integrity.

We have heard about his mentorship of law clerks, both men and women, liberals and conservatives. As I say, we have received testimonials from professionals across the ideological spectrum. Last week, a group of 80 former students from Harvard Law School, where Judge Kavanaugh taught, sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee. As you might imagine, they have a variety of perspectives on judicial philosophy and a wide range of political views, but they all agreed that Judge Kavanaugh is a rigorous thinker, a devoted teacher, and a gracious person.

Lastly, we have heard from the nominee himself. On the night President Trump announced his choice, Judge Kavanaugh said that he believes an independent judiciary is the crown jewel of our constitutional Republic. He promised to keep an open mind in every case, as a judge should, to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and to preserve the rule of law. Those words and the opinions from his many supporters demonstrate that Judge Kavanaugh is the right person to replace Justice Kennedy on the Supreme Court. Most people agree that it is the Supreme Court's job to fairly interpret the law, not to substitute their own

judgment—political, ideological, or personal—for that of Congress's when Congress has spoken, and I believe Judge Kavanaugh understands that deeply.

A number of our colleagues across the aisle have been left grasping at straws given his outstanding qualifications and the fact that he was confirmed back in 2006 to the second most powerful court in the Nation, the DC Circuit Court of Appeals.

Judge Kavanaugh is a well-known nominee both to the Senate Judiciary Committee and to the Senate itself, but some have recently criticized Judge Kavanaugh for expressing opposition to the independent counsel statute even though, once upon a time, they supported ending that very same statute themselves. There was bipartisan consensus to essentially let that statute lapse. So it is ironic that some are now using that as a point of criticism.

For example, in 1999, my colleague, the senior Senator from Illinois, called for getting rid of the statute, claiming that it allowed independent counsels to be unchecked, unbridled, unrestrained, and unaccountable. That just goes to show you—if you are in the Senate long enough, you are likely to find yourself on both sides of an argument. But in this case, there is no merit to any criticism of Judge Kavanaugh for something that Democrats and Republicans both agreed to do, which is to let the independent counsel statute lapse.

Another weakness in their argument is that there is a real difference between special counsels, such as Robert Mueller, and independent counsels under the old statute. They are not the same thing.

When Judge Kavanaugh spoke years ago about the independent counsel statute, he was referring to a law that Congress ultimately agreed in a bipartisan fashion to let expire and not renew because it was felt that independent counsels—particularly the last independent counsel, Ken Starr—had too much autonomy to investigate and prosecute any misconduct without clear rules and guidance and without clear oversight by Congress and the Department of Justice. We know that special counsels are different. They are constrained by regulations and are overseen by senior lawyers at the Department of Justice, and in the case of Director Mueller, by the Deputy Attorney General himself. It would be useful if our friends across the aisle would acknowledge this difference and this history.

A new poll has shown that significant majorities of voters in States such as North Dakota, West Virginia, and Indiana all want to see Judge Kavanaugh confirmed. Support is even stronger among Independents. I expect that as more Americans get to know him in the weeks ahead, those numbers will rise.

This nomination for a vacancy on the Supreme Court is Chairman GRASS-

LEY's 15th Supreme Court confirmation hearing, and I have no doubt that when he says this one will be the most searching and thorough of all of them, he means it.

I look forward to working with all of our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee to ensure that Judge Kavanaugh has a full and fair hearing, and not pull any punches whatsoever, but if the object is to delay for delay's sake or to criticize for criticism's sake, we intend to call that out during this process.

Based on what I have read and seen so far, I believe Judge Kavanaugh will ultimately be confirmed.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. President, there is one other item of business I want to mention, and it is some very good news we received yesterday. The House and Senate conferees announced an agreement on the National Defense Authorization Act, the NDAA. I am glad to hear that the final version included legislation I sponsored called FIRRMA, the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act. The senior Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, was my bipartisan cosponsor.

I thank Senator CRAPO, the chairman of the Banking Committee, who ushered this legislation through that committee, where it passed unanimously, and Senator INHOFE for leading the conference here on the Senate side and seeing that this important piece of legislation was included.

In June, President Trump called on Congress to pass a strong piece of legislation to modernize what is known as the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS. Now we are going to do exactly that. The Senate version of the bill updates CFIUS so we can guard against attempts—primarily by China but not only by China—to acquire sensitive dual-use technology and know-how by exploiting gaps in the U.S. rules on foreign investments.

This legislation takes a carefully tailored approach to updating the review process without hamstringing our ability to meaningfully engage in trade with partners around the world. It is not anti-foreign investment—just the opposite is true—but it is all about protecting our crown jewels when it comes to leading-edge technology that can be easily acquired through creative investment strategies, and then, along with the intellectual property and know-how, our competitors, such as China, can gain tremendous advantage.

I appreciate the support we have gotten from Secretary Mnuchin, our Treasury Secretary; Secretary Mattis, the Secretary of Defense; and many others. I again thank Senator FEINSTEIN for being the chief Democratic cosponsor. This has been a bipartisan effort from day one.

The message is, we simply can't let China erode our national security advantage by circumventing our laws and

exploiting investment opportunities for nefarious purposes. The backdoor transfer of technology, know-how, and industrial capabilities has gone unchecked for too long. That is why I am glad that once our bill becomes law, a newer, stronger CFIUS process will better protect us from evolving, investment-driven threats to our national security.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TABLE ROCK LAKE BOAT TRAGEDY

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I am here today to remember the 17 victims who lost their lives last week in the tragic boat accident on Table Rock Lake in Missouri.

At one time, I lived in Branson. Our home is now in Springfield, MO. It is a community that I represented in the Congress for 14 years before having the chance to represent them in the Senate.

Of course, the community has responded. But one of the reasons the community has responded in the way that it has is the truly tragic loss of life. There were 31 people on the boat that was overwhelmed by the water. Of those 31 people, 17 died. Of the 17 that died, 9 of the victims were members of the Coleman family from Indianapolis, IN.

Tia Coleman lost her husband, Glenn, and all three of their children.

On Saturday, Tia asked that her family members be remembered as they were. She said that her daughter, 1-year-old Arya, was a little fireball with 1,000 different personalities. Her 7-year-old son, Evan, according to his mom, was a great brother who was extremely smart and witty and loved life. Her 9-year-old son Reese, according to his mom, was the happiest little boy and made every day worth living.

Tia's nephew, Donovan Hall, who was the other surviving member of that family, lost his mother Angela and his brother Maxwell. Tia described her sister-in-law Angela as a loving mother who would do anything for her family, and 2-year-old Max loved big hugs.

Tia was laughing through her tears as she remembered her Uncle Ray as a man who liked to laugh and have a good time.

Tia's father-in-law, Horace "Butch" Coleman, is being remembered in Indianapolis as a legend in the community, having volunteered for more than four decades as a youth football coach. He and his wife, Belinda Coleman, were involved in the community. Belinda was described as a loving mom, a loving grandmother, and as a leader in their church.

Tia asked that all of us keep the Coleman family in our prayers as they adjust to this terrible tragedy.

Rosemarie Hamann and William Asher, from the St. Louis area, had just celebrated Rosemarie's 68th birthday. Their friends say they loved to dance and live life to the fullest. They both gave back to their community through local veterans organizations.

William and Janice Bright, from Higginsville, MO, were in Branson celebrating their 45th wedding anniversary. They are survived by their 3 children and 16 grandchildren, with another grandchild on the way, who will never get a chance to see their grandparents.

The Smith family of Osceola, AR, is mourning the loss of 53-year-old Steve Smith, a retired educator, and his 15-year-old son Lance. The Smiths were very active in their church. Steve was a deacon and Lance felt the call to the ministry at 15. He had just recently delivered his first sermon.

Leslie Dennison from Illinois died a hero. This 64-year-old grandmother pushed her 12-year-old granddaughter to the surface of the water, helping save that girl's life before she was overwhelmed by the water.

Former church pastor Bob Williams, who was driving the boat, was remembered by the Branson mayor, Karen Best, as "a great ambassador for Branson" and an active member of the community.

Certainly in the coming days we will learn more about these men and women and children and the lives they led and the lives that were ended tragically. We will also learn about the accident itself.

Senator McCASKILL and I were both there on the day after the accident as Federal officials arrived—the Coast Guard, responsible for certifying equipment like the boat that sank, and the National Travel Safety Board, which has the responsibility to investigate the accident and tell us what happened. Senator McCASKILL met with them early in the day. I met with them exactly 24 hours after the boat sank.

As we were finished with that meeting and looking out at the placid Table Rock Lake, it was impossible to imagine that was the same lake that was in videos of what had happened the day before.

Certainly Senator McCASKILL and I were also thinking of the first responders, the medical staff, looking at what mental health care was available not only for people who survived the accident but also for the people who responded.

There were people who were on a nearby showboat, the Branson Belle, who dove off the boat and immediately swam out to do what they could to help the people who were trying to save their own lives. One boat dock sent three or four different boats with basically high school guys who are working at that boat dock in the summer. I am sure if you are a 16, 17, 18-year-old young man, you think everything is OK, but we were both insistent that they try to have the kind of mental health counseling they needed, along

with the families and the survivors who were there, and certainly the community, with services that reacted in the right way.

It is unfortunate that we don't think as much as we should about the NTSB and their efforts. One of the things that certainly they will be looking at is their investigation of a similar accident almost 20 years ago in Arkansas on Lake Hamilton. The questions would be, I think, Did the Coast Guard do what they were supposed to do? Did the operators do what they were supposed to do? Did the equipment do what it was supposed to do? Certainly we will be looking carefully at the report to decide what needs to happen as a result of that report. Certainly this is an accident we wouldn't want to see happen ever again.

Since its inception, the NTSB has investigated thousands of aviation and surface transportation accidents. They are busy right now investigating what happened in Branson, MO. Other examples are the Southwest Airlines engine incident in April, the autonomous vehicle crash in Tempe, AZ, and the collision of the Amtrak train and the CSX freight train in South Carolina. That is what they do. Its staff and leadership are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Unfortunately, we have had two nominees for the National Transportation Safety Board who have been pending for consideration for many months—one a Democrat, another a Republican. The confirmation of those two people would ensure that the NTSB has a full board to fulfill its critical mission.

I have been assured that we are going to move forward with those confirmations later today. I can also assure my colleagues that Senator McCASKILL and I and Congressman LONG will be closely monitoring the investigation as we learn what happened and do what we need to do to make sure it never happens again.

So with gratitude to the first responders, the medical staff, and the members of the Branson community who stepped forward to assist in this tragedy, I close my remarks and turn to Senator McCASKILL for whatever she may have to say about this event.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleague. He and I were both in Branson last Friday. We didn't have a chance to see each other, but we were both there for the same reason; that is, an unspeakable tragedy in our State that has Federal involvement because the investigations will occur jointly with the Coast Guard and the NTSB.

I would echo many of the remarks that my colleague made. I particularly was struck when I was there—the highway patrol divers had just finished their work. They had the worst job maybe in the country last Friday, but certainly in Missouri. Their job was to

go to the bottom of the lake and find the bodies that had been trapped in this amphibious vehicle at the bottom of one of the most beautiful lakes in the world.

We never want a tragedy like this to strike in our State. I will tell my colleagues that the only silver lining I can find is that it happened in a part of our State where there is a great deal of love. There is a lot of openness in Branson, MO, for the travelers who come through, for all the tourists who come to Branson. We are very proud of that area of our State. The Ozarks have some of the most beautiful terrain God has created. These lakes that we have, both in the central part of our State and in the southwest part of our State, we are very proud of. They turned ugly and deadly last Thursday, and we have had a tremendous loss of life.

This investigation will take a year or more. I join my colleague in urging the Senate to approve these two nominees that have been pending for too long. It is my understanding we have gotten movement on that today. It is sad that it would take a tragedy like this to get this moving, but I believe that by the end of the day—I am at least optimistic at this point; I don't know what my colleague Senator BLUNT has learned, but I have learned that it appears that these nominees will be approved by the end of the day.

There were incredibly difficult weather conditions, but there are inherent dangers in these amphibious vehicles. We know this. How do we know this? Because it has been investigated before. We have had 40 deaths associated with duck boats since 1999, yet there has been little done to address the inherent danger of these amphibious vehicles. We had 13 deaths in Arkansas in Lake Hamilton in 1999, 4 deaths in the Ottawa River in Ontario, Canada in 2002, 2 in the Delaware River in Philadelphia in 2010, and then the 17 deaths that occurred last week. Additionally, we had five deaths when a vehicle collided, when it had an on-land collision in Seattle in 2015.

Back when the NTSB investigated the incident in Arkansas, which is about 200 miles south of Branson, they found contributing factors to that accident to be the lack of adequate buoyancy that would have allowed the vehicle to remain afloat in a flooded condition, the lack of adequate oversight by the Coast Guard, and, importantly, also the canopy. When these vehicles are on water, the canopy serves as a trap if they take on water and are sinking. People who are trying to get out have no easy way to escape this sinking vehicle because the canopy traps them within the vehicle.

It also is a problem in terms of wearing life jackets because if someone has a life jacket on and one of these vehicles goes down in the water, they get trapped against the roof even more because the buoyancy of the life jacket holds them against the roof and makes

it even more difficult for them to get to some point of ingress or egress.

These are not open vehicles. When they are in the water, it is almost like an enclosed bus. It is almost like—imagine if you are on an airplane in the water or on a bus in the matter. It is not a boat; it is a vehicle. So the NTSB recommendations were pretty straightforward. Unfortunately, nothing happened as a result of those recommendations.

I am in the early stages of drafting legislation with input from the NTSB and the Coast Guard to require that the design issues with these passenger vessels be addressed and that the boats that are not compliant be taken out of service until they can be compliant. We think that their past recommendations are reasonable and common sense. We really think the biggest problem that has to be addressed is this reserve buoyancy that has been pointed out in the past as part of the significant problem. If they can't do the buoyancy on a really timely basis, at a minimum, remove the canopies if they are going on the water so there is an opportunity for people to escape what is a sinking coffin, which it was; it was a sinking coffin for way too many people last Thursday.

As always, I want this to be done in a way that makes sense, but I don't think it makes sense for us to wait another year to address some of these glaring issues in terms of passenger safety.

I also would like to take a moment to recognize the victims in this tragedy. We had five victims who were from Missouri: William Asher, 69, and Rose Marie Hamann, 68, who both lived in St. Louis; Janice Bright and her husband, William Bright, 63 and 65, from Higginsville, MO, closer to Kansas City; Bob Williams, the driver, not the captain of the vessel, 73 years old, who lived in Branson.

From Arkansas, Steve Smith was 53, and Lance Smith was 15 years old.

From Illinois, Leslie Dennison was 64 years old.

Maybe the most heartbreaking, in some ways, was the large family who lost so many members as a result of this vehicle sinking in the Table Rock Lake: Angela, 45; Belinda, 69; Ervin, 76; Glenn, 40; Horace, 70; and then the Coleman children, including Reece, who was 9; Evan, who was 7; Maxwell, who was 2; and Arya, who was only 1 year old.

We mourn their deaths. I do think this is a situation where you do feel helpless. On the other hand, I do think there are steps we can take so that these particular amphibious vehicles are addressed in terms of passenger safety so that there is never again a feeling of helplessness when one of these boats finds itself in a situation where it is taking on water but the people in the vehicle cannot get out of the vehicle in order to save themselves and can't even avail themselves of life preservers in a way that would protect

them if for any reason they were not capable swimmers.

I am very proud of both NTSB and the Coast Guard, who were working well together when I was down there. Mayor Best was doing a terrific job. The Red Cross was there in full display in terms of providing services. The people of Branson were in the midst of an outpouring of love, affection, respect, and sympathy—and the entire State. Our Governor has done a good job.

Frankly, it is the silly season for me. This is the time when there are relatively few weeks until an election, and the fur is flying, and the politics go back and forth. It was like an oasis on Friday in terms of everyone coming together, setting their politics on the side of the road, and trying to work together to find answers to these difficult questions and come together as we should and find a way to protect the traveling public and the people.

The saddest thing about this is the people who went on this vehicle went because they were there having a great time. That is probably a cruel irony of this situation. They weren't taking a bus on the way to work. They weren't taking a plane on a business trip. They were enjoying a beautiful location with their family in the middle of what should have been a carefree moment, and it turned deadly and tragic. We do need to come together and try to make sure this doesn't happen in the future.

With a respectful nod to all the first responders and the people of the Branson community who have been so supportive, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, before the two Senators from Missouri leave the floor, let me express my personal condolences to them, which I know are shared by each and every Member of this body. The tragedy in Missouri is absolutely heartbreaking for the families, for the community, and for the State, and I want our two colleagues from Missouri to know that we stand with them during this very difficult time.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3405 AND 3422 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3399

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up en bloc: Heller amendment No. 3405 and Durbin amendment No. 3422. I further ask consent that at 2:15 p.m. today, there be 5 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form, and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote in relation to the Heller and Durbin amendments in the order listed and that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendments prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maine [Ms. COLLINS], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3405 and 3422 en bloc to amendment No. 3399.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3405

(Purpose: To increase the amount available for a Community Volunteer Income Tax Assistance matching grants program for tax return preparation assistance)

On page 154, line 14, strike "\$15,000,000" and insert "\$20,000,000".

AMENDMENT NO. 3422

(Purpose: To require the Inspector General to update an audit report concerning on-time performance of Amtrak)

In the matter under the heading "SALARIES AND EXPENSES" under the heading "OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL" under the heading "NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION" in title III of C.F. division D, in the fourth proviso, strike "Government." and insert the following: "Government: *Provided further*, That not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General shall update the report entitled 'Effects of Amtrak's Poor On-Time Performance', numbered CR-2008-047, and dated March 28, 2008, and make the updated report publicly available."

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PERDUE).

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, FINANCIAL SERVICES, AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

AMENDMENT NO. 3405

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I rise today in support of my amendment, Heller-Brown amendment No. 3405. This bipartisan amendment increases funding for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, better known as VITA, by \$5 million for the next fiscal year.

Building upon the success of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, it is important that we take additional steps to ensure that Nevada families are fully able to realize the benefits of the new tax laws and maximize their returns. The VITA Program is one way to do that.

The VITA Program offers free tax help to lower income and middle-income taxpayers—those who often need it the most—by helping them to prepare and file their income tax returns.

Every year, VITA programs help tens of thousands of Nevadans and millions of taxpayers nationwide keep more of their hard-earned money. As a statistic, in 2015, VITA sites helped nearly 23,000 Nevadans file their returns and processed refunds that exceeded \$25 million.

That is why I urge all of my colleagues to join me and Senator BROWN in supporting hard-working American taxpayers and voting yes on this bipartisan amendment, Heller-Brown amendment No. 3405.

I yield the remainder of my time to the Senator from Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, this is a big deal for Americans making \$15,000, \$20,000, \$30,000, or \$40,000 a year. They will get a refundable tax credit if they claim it—if they can figure out how to claim it, because it is sometimes too complicated. They can get \$2,000, \$3,000 \$4,000, or sometimes a little more than that, in the refundable tax credit. That is money in their pockets to buy school clothes. It is money in their pockets to fix a car that is broken down. It is money in their pockets so they can take their kids to a restaurant occasionally.

Filing taxes is complicated for everyone. It can be particularly challenging for those claiming the EITC. Wall Street CEO's and big companies have armies of accountants. This is for working-class families making \$20,000, \$30,000, or \$40,000 a year.

I thank Senator HELLER. I ask support for the Heller-Brown amendment. It will matter to so many working families in Mansfield, Toledo, Sandusky, and all over Ohio.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

AMENDMENT NO. 3422

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Senator WICKER of Mississippi and I have a bipartisan amendment that means a lot to thousands of people who use Amtrak. It has been 10 years since we asked the inspector general of Amtrak to do a study of on-time performance. On-time performance has a direct impact on the number of people who ride on Amtrak trains, how frequently they use them, and how much they rely upon them. There is a problem. Amtrak owns very few railway tracks in America. They share the tracks with freight trains, and the freight trains have been pushing ahead of them and making the Amtrak trains wait.

How long did they wait? Between 2016 and 2017, in 1 year, there was 17,000 hours of delay on Amtrak trains directly attributable to freight trains that didn't yield the way to the Amtrak trains. That is just one factor.

Senator WICKER and I have asked the inspector general to do a report on on-time performance that we can consider in making Amtrak more efficient, more profitable, and more popular with Americans.

I hope our colleagues will support our bipartisan amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise in support of Senator DURBIN and Senator WICKER's amendment. It would direct the Amtrak inspector general to update a report from 10 years ago that examined Amtrak's on-time performance. Some Amtrak routes, particularly along Amtrak's national network, are experiencing frequent delays, which makes train travel a less dependable option and discourages ridership.

Ten years ago, the IG report found that the delays were the result of host railroad dispatching practices, track maintenance, speed restrictions, insufficient track capacity, and, often, external factors beyond the host railroad's control.

The information that the Amtrak IG will collect in this report will be used to identify ways to improve coordination between Amtrak and the freight railroads.

I commend the authors for their amendment, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3405

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to the Heller amendment No. 3405.

Ms. COLLINS. 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. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 164 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Perdue
Bennet	Grassley	Peters
Blumenthal	Harris	Portman
Blunt	Hassan	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Brown	Heitkamp	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Cantwell	Hirono	Sanders
Capito	Hoeven	Sasse
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Carper	Inhofe	Schumer
Casey	Isakson	Scott
Cassidy	Johnson	Shaheen
Collins	Jones	Shelby
Coons	Kaine	Smith
Corker	Kennedy	Stabenow
Cornyn	King	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Tester
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Leahy	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	Manchin	Udall
Donnelly	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden
Fischer	Murkowski	Young
Flake	Murphy	

NAYS—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The amendment (No. 3405) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3422

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to the Durbin amendment No. 3422.

Mr. WICKER. 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 assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 165 Leg.]

YEAS—99

Alexander	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Bennet	Grassley	Perdue
Blumenthal	Harris	Peters
Blunt	Hassan	Portman
Booker	Hatch	Reed
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Brown	Heitkamp	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rounds
Cantwell	Hirono	Rubio
Capito	Hoeven	Sanders
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schatz
Casey	Isakson	Schumer
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott
Collins	Jones	Shaheen
Coons	Kaine	Shelby
Corker	Kennedy	Smith
Cornyn	King	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Tester
Crapo	Leahy	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Manchin	Toomey
Donnelly	Markey	Udall
Duckworth	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Warren
Ernst	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Wyden
Flake	Murphy	Young

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The amendment (No. 3422) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the latest efforts to derail the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to be Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. I would like to focus today on a few areas where attacks have come up.

Judge Kavanaugh's critics, faced with an exceptionally well-qualified, baseball-loving, carpool-driving nominee, are struggling to find anything that might slow or even stop his confirmation. Let me focus today on a few areas where their attacks have come up short.

It seems that some folks can't mention Judge Kavanaugh without suggesting in the same breath that his confirmation would somehow be the death knell of Special Counsel Mueller's investigation. It can be difficult to keep straight critics' dizzying array of claims on these separation of powers issues, but it is worth taking a closer look to set the record straight.

It was hard to miss the headline, "Brett Kavanaugh Once Argued That a

Sitting President Is Above the Law,” or the article that suggested Judge Kavanaugh “has been an open advocate for precisely the sort of imperial presidency that the founders of the American experiment feared.”

Democrats soon piled on, but never in the law review article that spurred this hysteria did Judge Kavanaugh suggest that a President would be immune from civil or criminal liability. Rather, he suggested that, as a policy matter, it might be wise for Congress to enact a law that would defer such litigation until the President leaves office, and, of course, Congress could accelerate that timeline through impeachment.

Judge Kavanaugh's law review article represents an interesting policy proposal—and one, it is worth noting, that he offered while a Democrat was in the White House. The critics' attempts to equate his policy recommendations with his views on the constitutional limitations on prosecutions of sitting Presidents are simply wrong. If anything, Judge Kavanaugh's recommendation that Congress enact a law suggests that in the absence of any such legislation, a sitting President can be investigated and perhaps even prosecuted.

Then there was the hoopla over Judge Kavanaugh's statement that he would “put the final nail” in the ruling that upheld the constitutionality of independent counsels; never mind the fact that the independent counsel statute expired nearly two decades ago and was described by Eric Holder as “too flawed to be renewed.”

Today, special counsels, such as Robert Mueller, are appointed pursuant to Department of Justice regulations. They do not represent the same constitutional concerns as the independent counsel statute. By conflating independent counsels and special counsels, Judge Kavanaugh's critics ignore his own record on the matter.

In a dissenting opinion he wrote last year, Judge Kavanaugh himself observed: “The independent counsel is, of course, distinct from the traditional special counsels who are appointed by the Attorney General for particular matters.” But Democrats just figure that the average American will gloss over the distinction between independent counsels and special counsels and tune out legal experts who say that Judge Kavanaugh's views on the independent counsel law have absolutely nothing to do with the Mueller investigation. By the time we are on to them, Democrats will have already moved on to a new line of attack.

The latest was the minority leader's suggestion that Judge Kavanaugh “would have let Nixon off the hook” based on comments Judge Kavanaugh once made about the Supreme Court's unanimous decision in the *United States v. Nixon*. They forced President Nixon to turn over the Watergate tapes, but those comments—read by some who would suggest that Judge Kavanaugh thinks the case was wrong-

ly decided—ignores the context of those specific remarks and the mountain of evidence that Judge Kavanaugh agrees with the Court's ruling in *Nixon*.

There is the law review article in which Judge Kavanaugh wrote that there was “no need to revisit” *Nixon* and that the case “reflects the proper balance of the President's need for confidentiality and the government's interest in obtaining all relevant evidence for criminal proceedings.”

More recently, he has cited *Nixon* as one of “the greatest moments in American judicial history . . . when judges stood up to the other branches, were not cowed, and enforced the law.”

Those sure don't sound like the words of a judge who is critical of the Court's decision in *Nixon*, much less a judge who would vote to overrule it, but this more fulsome look at Judge Kavanaugh's writings on the issue is at odds with the Democrats' campaign to paint Judge Kavanaugh as an existential threat to the Mueller investigation. So they are content to cherry-pick and mischaracterize Judge Kavanaugh's record.

On the subject of Judge Kavanaugh's record, I would also like to talk about the Democrats' fixation on the issue of Judge Kavanaugh's documents from his years of service in the executive branch. It has only been 2 weeks since President Trump nominated Judge Kavanaugh, and yet Democrats seem more interested in using their time talking about documents they do not yet have rather than carefully reviewing the unprecedented number of documents that are already available to the Senate and the American public. Specifically, we aren't hearing much from Democrats about the more than 300 opinions Judge Kavanaugh has authored during his time on the Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. In these opinions, Judge Kavanaugh has addressed a vast array of hot-button issues Democrats claim to be so interested in: separation of powers, administrative law, national security, religious liberty, immigration, and so many more.

Something Judge Kavanaugh told me when I met with him recently really stuck with me. He told me, he hoped people would actually read his opinions, not just articles about his opinions but actually read the opinions themselves. So I would urge my Senate colleagues to indulge Judge Kavanaugh on this point. These opinions are gold for any Senator making an honest effort to evaluate Judge Kavanaugh's judicial philosophy.

Judge Kavanaugh has spent the past 12 years in public service and as a Federal appellate judge. Now, he has been nominated to be—you guessed it—a Federal appellate judge. I can think of no better evidence of Judge Kavanaugh's judicial philosophy or his qualifications to serve on our Nation's highest Court than the thousands of pages and opinions he authored during

his time on what is arguably our Nation's second highest Court. If Democrats actually took the time to follow Judge Kavanaugh's advice and read his opinions—not just articles about them or summaries prepared by staff—they might be disappointed to learn that there is nothing to suggest that people will die if he is confirmed, and they might actually learn how Judge Kavanaugh interprets the Constitution and the laws passed by Congress. Isn't that what all of this commotion is about? It is about documents. Isn't that really what it is about?

I suggest Judge Kavanaugh's opinions should be more than enough to assess his qualifications and judicial temperament, not to mention the thousands of pages from his time in the executive branch that are already publicly available. I understand this represents just a fraction of the documents the Senate will ultimately receive—likely to be far more than those received for any other Supreme Court nominee in history.

Senator GRASSLEY has pledged that relevant records will be made available through a fair and thorough process, but, for some, it is never enough. We have heard Democrats claim they are not demanding every scrap of paper that crosses Judge Kavanaugh's White House desk, but they have also said the standard for determining what is relevant and subject to production should be whatever Senators—in other words, Democrats—think is relevant. Some have even claimed that all the documents are “extremely relevant.”

Well, if Democrats think the standard for document production should be whatever Senators think is relevant—and they think everything is relevant—then it sure sounds like they are asking for every scrap of paper.

Now, it is true that Republicans sought White House documents for Justice Kagan's nomination, but these two nominations—Kagan and Kavanaugh—are hardly comparable. At the time of her nomination, Justice Kagan had no judicial record to speak of whatsoever, having never served as a judge at any level. She had no written opinions. There was almost nothing we could use to assess her judicial philosophy.

The White House record was among the very limited information we had to gauge her fitness to serve, so, of course, we asked to see it. By contrast, Judge Kavanaugh has 12 years of experience on the Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, the second highest Court in this country, and that is not even to mention over 300 opinions.

Again, thousands of pages have been written clearly outlining Judge Kavanaugh's views on the Constitution. If Judge Kavanaugh's extensive record is not enough to paint a clear picture of judicial philosophy, then what is? What more do Democrats need to know that this is a man who is eminently qualified to serve on our Nation's highest Court?

I can only think of one reason a Senator would need every scrap of paper to evaluate the qualifications of a judicial nominee—any nominee, for that matter—that is, if they are going on a never-ending fishing expedition, which is clearly what the Democrats have been doing since the day Judge Kavanaugh's nomination was announced.

I urge my colleagues to follow Judge Kavanaugh's advice. Read his opinions. You undoubtedly will learn something about how Judge Kavanaugh interprets the Constitution and the laws passed by Congress. Then, by all means, continue your fishing expedition, but at least you will have consulted the record that matters the most.

All I can say is, this man has an excellent record. There are plenty of things to look at. The more you look at them, the more you realize this fellow does really belong on the Supreme Court, and he will make a difference in the future.

PIONEER DAY

Mr. President, on another matter, I wish to speak today in celebration of Pioneer Day, a holiday my home State of Utah observes each July 24 to commemorate the arrival of the Mormon pioneers to the Great Salt Lake Valley. On this special day, Utah and communities in other States remember the extraordinary history of the Mormon pioneers who endured tremendous hardship in search of religious freedom in this great country that is set up for religious freedom, but they were mistreated and fought against from day one.

In honor of Pioneer Day, I submitted a Senate resolution recognizing the sacrifices of the Mormon pioneers in their pursuit of religious liberty and their invaluable contributions to the settlement of the American West. I hope the Senate will join me in commending the pioneers for their example of courage, industry, and faith that continues to inspire people throughout the world.

In the years following the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1830, the Latter-day Saints—or Mormons as they are more commonly known—encountered much religious persecution in this freest of all lands. They suffered physical assault, threats of violence, death, in some cases, and war, prison, rape, and murder. Violent mobs damaged their houses and businesses, stole their property, and drove them from their homes. Especially devastating was the martyrdom of their leader and beloved prophet, Joseph Smith, who was shot and killed with his brother as well, by an armed mob.

Despite the discrimination and abuse they endured—sometimes at the hands of government officials who should have protected them from violence and injustice—the Latter-day Saints remained a patriotic people who loved and revered the Constitution of the United States. Still, they recognized

they would need to seek refuge in an unknown territory to live in safety and practice their religion free from hostility and abuse.

In search of such a haven, the Mormon pioneers fled Illinois in the winter of 1846 and proceeded westward on a journey that would cover more than 1,300 miles of wilderness, across arid deserts, jagged mountains, and turbulent rivers.

Along the way, the Mormon pioneers erected bridges, built ferries, and cleared trails to assist those who would follow their path. They established communities, planted crops, and expanded trade posts that provided the crucial supplies necessary to survive expeditions onward. They learned how to irrigate and make the desert blossom as a rose, and their irrigation principles have been followed all over the world.

They set up trail markers and charted maps that guided thousands of settlers westward. The United States certainly owes a debt of gratitude to those pioneers for their contributions to our Nation's settlement of the West.

Their service to our country did not come without significant personal cost. Throughout the arduous trek, the pioneers battled harsh climates, illness, hunger, and exhaustion. Many lost their children, spouses, parents, and friends to exposure, disease, and starvation. Yet they confronted crippling sorrow and hardship with incredible grace and a steadfast trust in their Heavenly Father. They expressed gratitude for the strength to surmount each challenge and gloried in life's daily miracles. What could have broken their spirit only fortified their convictions and drew them closer to the Divine.

Upon entering Utah's Great Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847, their new leader, Brigham Young announced: "This is the right place." This prophetic declaration foretold how the valley would become home to many Latter-day Saints and their posterity.

Unfamiliar with the area and with few resources at their disposal, the pioneers worked together to plant their crops, irrigate fields, and build houses and businesses, thus transforming the barren desert into a thriving set of communities.

Two years later, on July 24, the Latter-day Saints first commemorated their arrival to their new home with a procession to Salt Lake City's Temple Square for a special devotional followed by a feast of thanksgiving. Today, Pioneer Day is one of the largest regional celebrations in the United States, where we remember the early settlers with parades, flag ceremonies, reenactments, devotionals, sporting events, feasts, dances, concerts, festivals, rodeos, and fireworks.

The rich heritage of the pioneers is shared not only by Utahns and those of the Mormon faith but with people throughout the world, regardless of religious affiliation. These pioneers demonstrated what can be accomplished

when industrious and resilient people stand together as one to build a brighter future. Their determination and ingenuity encourages our own pioneer spirit, calling on us to strive toward further progress and innovation. Their example of courage empowers us to triumph over adversity and inspires us to press forward with unconquerable faith and undaunted hope.

On Pioneer Day this July 24, I hope we not only remember these remarkable pioneers but reflect on what we can do to follow in their footsteps and ensure their legacy lives on in us and in future generations.

I am proud to be a descendant of these pioneers. My family was part of the pioneers. Yes, I was born in Pittsburgh, but I couldn't wait to move to Utah. I love Pittsburgh, but I love Utah more. I have to say, part of that is because of my pioneer heritage and my desire to see that Utah continually improves itself and continually makes its case on how important these pioneers really were and are to us even today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, a lot of praise has flowed in for Judge Kavanaugh since his nomination, but I think the tribute that has struck me the most is the letter from his law clerks. These individuals have worked closely with Judge Kavanaugh and have a special insight into his temperament and philosophy. Here is what they have to say:

It is in his role as a judge on the D.C. Circuit that we know Judge Kavanaugh best. During his time on the D.C. Circuit, Judge Kavanaugh has come to work every day dedicated to engaging in the hard work of judging.

We never once saw him take a shortcut, treat a case as unimportant, or search for an easy answer. Instead, in each case, large or small, he masters every detail, and rereads every precedent. He listens carefully to the views of his colleagues and clerks, even—indeed, especially—when they differ from his own. He drafts opinions painstakingly, writing and rewriting until he is satisfied each opinion is clear and well-reasoned, and can be understood not only by lawyers but by the parties and the public.

We saw time and time again that this work ethic flows from a fundamental humility. Judge Kavanaugh never assumes he knows the answers in advance and never takes for granted that his view of the law will prevail.

Those are the words of 34 of Judge Kavanaugh's law clerks. Every one of Judge Kavanaugh's clerks who was not prohibited by his or her job signed this letter.

These clerks represent a diverse group. They wrote:

Our views on politics, on many of the important legal issues faced by the Supreme Court, and on judicial philosophy, are diverse. Our ranks include Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. But we are united in this: Our admiration and fondness for Judge Kavanaugh run deep. For each of us . . . it was a tremendous stroke of luck to work for and be mentored by a person of his strength of character, generosity of spirit,

intellectual capacity, and unwavering care for his family, friends, colleagues, and us, his law clerks.

This letter is a pretty significant tribute, and it confirms what has been clear from the beginning, and that is that Judge Kavanaugh is the type of judge who should sit on the Nation's highest Court. His clerks describe a judge who takes the weight of his responsibility seriously; a judge who is committed to reaching the right decision in every case and who does the hard work necessary to get to that decision; a judge who approaches each case with an open mind, looking for what the law says, not the outcome he wants.

As Chief Justice John Roberts famously said, "Judges are like umpires." Their job is to call the balls and strikes, not rewrite the rules of the game. As Justice Roberts said, "Umpires don't make the rules; they apply them." It is essential that a judge understand this. If you are a judge, your job is to rule based on the law and the Constitution and nothing else. Your job is not to make policy. It is not to revise the law according to your personal feelings or your political principles. Your job is to figure out what the law says and to rule accordingly.

Why is this so important? Well, it is because the rule of law and equal justice under the law only exist as long as judges rule based on the law. Once judges start ruling based on their political opinions or their feelings about what they would like the law to be, then we will have replaced the rule of law with the rule of individual judges.

As the testimony of his clerks and many others makes clear, Judge Kavanaugh understands the role of a judge. He understands that his job is to interpret the law, not make the law; to rule based on the plain text of the statute, not his personal opinions or political beliefs.

In a 2017 speech at Notre Dame Law School, Judge Kavanaugh said:

I believe very deeply in those visions of the rule of law as a law of rules, and of the judge as umpire. By that, I mean a neutral, impartial judiciary that decides cases based on settled principles without regard to policy preferences or political allegiances or which party is on which side of a particular case.

I will say it again: That is the kind of Justice we want on the Supreme Court. I hope this Senate will take very seriously the responsibility we have to give fair consideration to this nominee.

Mr. President, 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, you couldn't follow this President's tweets

with a roadmap, a GPS, a flashlight, and a program. It is impossible to understand the policy of this administration for this country, and when you try to follow his actions instead of his words, it is even more confusing.

Over the past few weeks, President Trump's conduct when it comes to foreign policy has been head-spinning, even for him. To recap, he insulted our best allies of 70 years and then turned around and lobbied for Russia at a recent G7 meeting and again bullied our key allies at a summit on NATO. He then met privately with Russian President Putin and then held a press conference with him in which President Trump blamed America and defended Putin's words over the expertise of his own government intelligence agencies. Keep in mind that he also inexplicably met privately with President Putin at the G20 summit in Hamburg last year—an event which he initially denied.

Why all these private meetings between President Trump and President Putin? Why wouldn't he let his Secretary of State sit in the room? Why wouldn't he let his National Security Advisor witness the conversation? I don't know the answer to these questions, and neither does America.

Then the President tried to backpedal from some of his most outrageous statements. At the end of the day, after trying that and deciding it wasn't worth the effort, he backed around again and decided to side with President Putin. It is impossible to keep track of where this President has been or is going.

President Trump then questioned the bedrock NATO alliance, asking why the United States should come to the defense of one of its members. Incidentally, that is the heart and soul of the NATO alliance—article 5: We stand together. When the United States was attacked on 9/11, it was the NATO alliance that stood with us when we struck back at Afghanistan and al-Qaida. They stood by us because of article 5, the very basis of the NATO alliance, which this President has questioned.

He said that no U.S. President has been harder on Russia than President Trump. He argued: "I think President Putin knows that better than anybody." Then he said he wanted to invite President Putin to the United States as his special personal guest. Go figure.

As President Trump weakens a great military alliance like NATO, bullies our allies of seven decades, cozies up to a foreign dictator, and talks in circles about his bizarre tweets and actions, what has been the priority of the Republican Party on the floor of the Senate since the summit—the disastrous summit—at Helsinki? Well, the Republican leader, Senator McConnell, has not spoken on the Senate floor on this issue since the Helsinki summit, not even one time.

Why aren't we urgently moving legislation to protect America's membership in NATO, ensure the integrity of

our upcoming election, and fully implement last year's Russian sanctions bill? I can't answer that. I don't think the Republican leader can answer it either. Those are national security priorities.

Maybe it isn't surprising because when Senator McConnell was told about the Russian intervention in our last 2016 election by the top intelligence officials of the U.S. Government and asked to make a bipartisan statement condemning it, he declined.

Why would a congressional leader not want to join in a bipartisan effort to warn a foreign power to stop its attack on democracy? Why the silence on this floor, on that side of the aisle, since the Helsinki summit conference?

There is not absolute silence. I will commend my ailing but respected and often-quoted colleague JOHN MCCAIN in Arizona, who sends messages from his home to this Chamber, to the U.S. Senate. What did he call the Helsinki summit? "[O]ne of the most disgraceful performances by an American president in memory." JOHN MCCAIN has never been one to mince words. I have to say that quote hit the nail on the head.

I want to put another word in here. Every time I hear politicians and all the smartest people on Earth on television referring to what happened in the 2016 election as the Russians meddling in our election—you heard that term, "meddling" in our election? If a seasoned criminal broke into your home to case it for a later burglary, would you say that burglar was just meddling? No. "Breaking and entering" might be the proper term. That is what happened with the Russians in the 2016 U.S. election. They broke and entered our election system across the United States.

The reason I know that, one of the targets happened to be my home State of Illinois. They found a way to sneak into the computers of the Illinois State Board of Elections and, according to the Special Counsel's recent indictment, stole information related to approximately one-half million voters in my State of Illinois. The State discovered it and sent out warnings to voters whose registration data may have been accessed.

Was that meddling? Not in Illinois. Those were fighting words. That was a cyber attack by the Russians on the State of Illinois Board of Elections, and they followed up by trying to hit 20 other States as well.

Meddling? Give me a break. This is a cyber act of war by the Russians, and our intelligence officials of the Trump administration—like Dan Coats, the Director of National Intelligence—have warned us, the red lights are blinking again. They are coming back.

What are we doing about it? Nothing. There will be a chance for my Republican colleagues to join the Democrats in a bipartisan effort to take this seriously before it is too late. What do we have left, 105 days until the election? It

is not much time. The question is whether we will do something to try to protect our election system. Every Member of this Chamber will have an opportunity to vote to ensure that State and local election officials have the resources to stop any other effort by the Russians to interfere in our election.

Earlier this year, we came together and passed a bill—a bipartisan bill—that provided \$380 million in fiscal year 2018 omnibus spending for States to modernize and secure their election systems. Funding gave the States flexibility to tackle the most critical priorities: replacing outdated voting machines, for example, that have no paper trail, updating election computer systems to address cyber vulnerabilities. The Election Assistance Commission reports that 55 different entities, including all the States and territories, have requested funding from this grant program. That was an important first step. It was bipartisan. It should be done. It was done, but it is not enough.

After the 2000 election, and months of news coverage about hanging chads and butterfly ballots, Congress passed a Help America Vote Act to address the outdated election infrastructure in America. We authorized \$3.8 billion to respond to this issue. A few months ago, we authorized one-tenth of that to respond to the Russian threat. We need to respond to that threat in a much more robust manner.

I received a memo from our election authorities in Illinois specifying how they plan to spend their grant funds and what they need to do to be more certain that their election operations and machinery are intact, and virtually every State can provide me with a similar memo.

We need to respond to this threat in a meaningful, robust manner. We know full well in Illinois what the Russians could have done to us. If they had taken 500,000 voter registration records and simply changed one number in the street address of each voter, let me tell you what would have happened. When I turned up to vote in Springfield, IL, and listed my home address, they would have said: No, that address doesn't match our records. You can vote a provisional ballot if you wish. We will look into it later.

That could have happened thousands of times. Thank goodness it didn't, but that is the extent of our vulnerability. It is a suggestion of what we might face again from the Russians, according to our own Intelligence agencies.

Last year, the Department of Homeland Security notified election officials in 20 other States that Russians attempted to hack into their systems, including Texas, Iowa, and Florida—Mr. President, your home State of Arizona—Oklahoma, Alabama, Pennsylvania, Alaska, Colorado, North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Ohio.

We have to make sure we are prepared for future attacks on our democracy. That is why I have joined Senator

LEAHY—who is on the floor with me today—and Senator KLOBUCHAR, preparing an amendment to the appropriations legislation we are going to consider, offering an additional \$250 million in election security grants to our States.

When a similar amendment was offered at a committee markup last month, we heard it was too early to talk about additional funding; we need to wait and see how the \$380 million earlier appropriated would be spent.

We know the answer. At a recent Senate Rules Committee hearing, Cook County Director of Elections Noah Praetz explained that though the \$380 million was greatly appreciated, more resources are desperately needed. He said: "Given the costs of regular technology refreshes and support for human resources with cyber capacity, the needed investment is very large."

Last week, when asked if the \$380 million was enough to address the problem, the President of the National Association of Secretaries of State said: "[N]o, to put it bluntly . . . Congress needs to come up with some kind of a funding mechanism that is sustainable and year-in, year-out, not once every 10 years."

Just yesterday, a bipartisan group of State attorneys general asked Congress for increased funding because many States lack the resources and tools they need to protect their polling places.

I urge the adoption of the Leahy-Klobuchar amendment.

It is also time for the majority to heed former Senator Bill Frist's sage advice when he wrote recently in the Washington Post: "[P]atriotism should always take priority over party."

I say to the Presiding Officer, I know you know that, personally, and you have proven it.

Senator Frist went on to say that "staying silent is no longer an option."

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate what the distinguished senior Senator from Illinois just said. I will speak about the same amendment. We will be offering this amendment. It does provide \$250 million for State election security grants. It provides it to protect our upcoming elections from attacks by Russia especially but from many other hostile foreign powers.

We don't do this as an exercise. We know the attacks have been there in the past, and they are coming in the future. Look at what our intelligence community said. They unanimously said that Russia interfered in our 2016 election.

After the intelligence community unanimously said they interfered, Congress came together, and we appropriated \$380 million for State election security grants in the fiscal year 2018 omnibus.

Since that time, all 55 eligible States and territories have requested funding.

One hundred percent of these funds have been committed to the States. As of yesterday, 90 percent of the funds have been disbursed to the States. This is pretty remarkable considering that the fiscal year 2018 omnibus was signed into law just 4 months ago.

I have asked what the funding was used for. I am told it has assisted States in improving election cyber security. They have replaced outdated election equipment. They have undertaken other anti-cyber efforts.

That is an important first step. I know all of us do not want our democracy attacked by foreign aggression. More is needed. It is certainly needed before the November 2018 elections—I might say even afterward.

States need postelection audit systems. They have to be able to verify the accuracy of the final vote tally. They have to be able to upgrade election-related computer systems if our Department of Homeland Security identifies vulnerabilities. I believe the State and local election officials should undergo cyber security training. They should start using established cyber security best practices. These efforts are all essential to the security of our elections, and my amendment would enable them to go forward. In fact, yesterday, 21 State attorneys general signed a letter. They urged Congress to appropriate more funding for the States to help them meet their security needs.

Let me quote from their letter. They said:

Additional funding for voter infrastructure will not only allow states to upgrade the election systems, but will also allow for a comprehensive security risk assessment. Unfortunately, past practice has shown that the existing Election Assistance Commission grants are simply insufficient to provide for the upgraded technology needed. More funding is essential to adequately equip states for the financial resources we need to safeguard our democracy and protect the data of voting members in our states.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, at the conclusion of my remarks, a letter, dated July 23, 2018, signed by 21 State attorneys general.

Mr. President, it is clear that Congress—this involves everybody in the Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike—must serve as a bulwark against Russian aggression. I say this because our President has, time and again, proven he is either unable or unwilling to do so. Standing on the world stage with Vladimir Putin, with everybody watching, President Trump repeatedly refused to condemn Russia's attacks on our democracy. He almost groveled to the authoritarian Putin. He praised and defended Putin's "strong denial" of Russian interference. Then, to make it worse, President Trump attacked our own law enforcement institutions while standing feet away from the very foe our institutions work so hard to protect us from.

All of our intelligence communities and law enforcement have the sworn

duty to protect all Americans from foes like Russia. The President stands next to the President of Russia and attacks the same law enforcement institutions that protect us.

This brought about, not unexpectedly, bipartisan outrage over the Helsinki fiasco. The next day, the President tried to walk back his comments. But in typical fashion, he tried to have it both ways. He repeated the baseless claim that the attack “could be other people also.” Then, the very next day, when asked whether Russia is still targeting the United States, the President inexplicably said, “No.” That was roughly 48 hours after his own Director of National Intelligence issued a statement reaffirming that Russia is engaged in “ongoing, pervasive efforts to undermine our democracy.” Without going into any of the classified material—just go by what our intelligence agencies have said publicly. Russia is engaged in “ongoing, pervasive efforts to undermine our democracy.” And when the President is asked whether they are targeting the United States, the answer isn’t no, it is yes.

Some have argued that this is an issue for the States to deal with entirely on their own, that the Federal Government should not involve itself in States’ electoral systems. But our States were attacked in 2016 by a foreign adversary, and their election systems were hacked by Russia’s foreign military intelligence service.

If any one of our States was attacked by a foreign government, would we stand by and say: Well, that is the State’s problem. No. We wouldn’t say: Well, it is not my State, it is not my problem. You are on your own. Of course not. An attack on any one of us is an attack on all of us. We are the United States of America. We would come together to protect that State. We would provide the Federal resources to help them out. That is what we Americans do. The same standard applies here in helping States strengthen and protect their election infrastructure.

We Senators from both parties have a choice: We either heed the fact-based warnings of our dedicated law enforcement and national security professionals or we do as President Trump has done and say: Well, we will take Vladimir Putin at his word. I don’t. We either choose to act as a coequal branch of government to defend our democracy or leave that responsibility to a President who doesn’t see the threat. In fact, he embraces the threat even when it is standing right beside him.

I say to my fellow Senators, if you believe that Russia is fully intent on destabilizing our democracy yet again in November, which is something every one of our national security and law enforcement officials believes—the people who read all the classified matters every single day, the people who know our intelligence backward and forward believe Russia is fully intent on destabilizing our democracy—let’s stand up

for our country. Let’s stand up for our intelligence services and have this amendment as a chance to take action—more than anything else, to stand up for America, stand up for our democracy.

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

STATE OF NEW MEXICO,
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,
Santa Fe, NM, July 23, 2018.

Chairman MICHAEL MCCAUL,
House Homeland Security Committee,
Washington, DC.
Chairman ROY BLUNT,
Senate Rules and Administration Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR HONORABLE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
The undersigned Attorneys General write to express our grave concern over the threat to the integrity of the American election system. As the latest investigations and indictments make clear, during the 2016 election, hackers within Russia’s military intelligence service not only targeted state and local election boards, but also successfully invaded a state election website to steal the sensitive information of approximately 500,000 American voters and infiltrated a company that supplies voting software across the United States.

The allegations in these indictments are extremely troubling. They evidence technologically vulnerable election infrastructures and the existence of a malicious foreign actor eager to exploit these vulnerabilities. Moreover, it has never been more important to maintain confidence in our democratic voting process. It is imperative that we protect the integrity of our elections. We must ensure that the upcoming 2018 midterm elections are secure and untainted. Accordingly, we ask for your assistance in shoring up our systems so that we may protect our elections from foreign attacks and interference by:

Prioritizing and acting on election-security legislation. We understand that the Secure Elections Act (S.2261) is before the Senate at this time and may address some of our concerns.

Increasing funding for the Election Assistance Commission to support election security improvements at the state level and to protect the personal data of the voters of our states. We are concerned that many states lack the resources and tools they need to protect the polls. Additional funding for voting infrastructure will not only allow states to upgrade election systems, but will also allow for a comprehensive security risk assessment. Unfortunately, past practice has shown that the existing Election Assistance Commission grants are simply insufficient to provide for the upgraded technology needed. More funding is essential to adequately equip states with the financial resources we need to safeguard our democracy and protect the data of voting members in our states.

Supporting the development of cybersecurity standards for voting systems to prevent potential future foreign attacks. It is critical that there be a combined effort between governments and security experts to protect against the increased cyber threats posed by foreign entities seeking to weaken our institutions.

These changes are essential in order to strengthen public trust in our electoral system. The integrity of the nation’s voting infrastructure is a bipartisan issue, and one that affects not only the national political landscape, but elections at the state, county, municipal, and local levels. It is our hope that you agree, and will take swift action to

protect our national legacy of fair and free elections.

Respectfully,

Hector Balderas, Attorney General of New Mexico; George Jepsen, Attorney General of Connecticut; Karl Racine, Attorney General for the District of Columbia; Lisa Madigan, Attorney General of Illinois; Janet Mills, Attorney General of Maine; Maura Healy, Attorney General of Massachusetts; Lori Swanson, Attorney General of Minnesota; Gurbir Grewal, Attorney General of New Jersey; Josh Stein, Attorney General of North Carolina; Peter F. Kilmartin, Attorney General of Rhode Island; Bob Ferguson, Attorney General of Washington; Xavier Becerra, Attorney General of California; Matthew P. Denn, Attorney General of Delaware; Russell Suzuki, Attorney General of Hawaii; Thomas J. Miller, Attorney General of Iowa; Brian Frosh, Attorney General of Maryland; Bill Schuette, Attorney General of Michigan; Jim Hood, Attorney General of Mississippi; Barbara D. Underwood, Attorney General of New York; Ellen Rosenblum, Attorney General of Oregon; Mark R. Herring, Attorney General of Virginia.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I don’t know whether there are others seeking the floor. I was going to suggest the absence of a quorum, but I see the distinguished senior Senator from Minnesota, and I yield to her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Vermont for his leadership, and I am pleased that Senator DURBIN has brought us together. I also see the Senator from Delaware and the Senator from Oregon here.

I appreciate the work we have seen on the other side of the aisle on so many of these issues regarding elections and Russia, including the Presiding Officer’s support for moving forward on a number of these things.

Our next election is right around the corner. In fact, this coming Saturday marks 100 days from the 2018 elections. As we prepare for the midterm elections, two things are clear: First, we must hold Russia accountable for the attacks against our democracy in 2016. This wasn’t meddling. This wasn’t just sending a few little tweets. This was an actual cyber attack on our democracy, and we have to call it what it was. Secondly, we must do more to deter Russia and safeguard our democracy against future attacks.

As complex as all this is, that is really quite simple. The first thing is, we have to figure out what happened and hold the people accountable. That is what is happening with the Mueller investigation, and that is what is happening with the Intelligence Committee investigation and other committees as well. Secondly, we have to protect our own democracy in the future from Russia, from other foreign entities, from anyone who might try to take away our democracy. That is exactly what happened in this last election.

Over the last 18 months, I have come to the floor time and again to make this point: Election security is national security. Efforts to interfere in our domestic politics and attack our election infrastructure represent a threat to our democracy and our security.

We know that Russia coordinated an attack against our democracy that launched cyber attacks against at least 21 States, including my own. The latest indictment from Special Counsel Mueller's investigation revealed that the Russians hacked the website of a State board of elections and stole the information of roughly 500,000 voters. We not only have them potentially trying to influence the vote, we also have them actually stealing voters' private information, which, of course, is another way to deter voters from wanting to vote. Russia's efforts also included sophisticated information warfare designed to divide our country and weaken Americans' confidence in our election system.

Hard-working women and men in our intelligence agencies from both Democratic and Republican administrations have confirmed this. The heads of all of our major intelligence operations under President Obama and under President Trump have said that this happened. In fact, months ago, Director Coats said that not only did it happen but that the Russians are getting, in his words, bolder.

Yet, this month in Helsinki, President Trump was asked if he stands by the conclusions of the U.S. intelligence community or the denials of Vladimir Putin. He chose to go with Putin. He stood there in front of the world, and he called Putin's words "extremely strong and powerful." That is why so many in this Chamber—Republican and Democratic Members of the Senate—have come out and called him on it and affirmed the U.S. intelligence conclusions and denounced the President's actions.

There is no substitute for Presidential leadership—we know that—but in its absence, Congress must act. We need to make strong bipartisan commitments to defend our elections and show unwavering support for our intelligence agencies.

Among others things, today Senator GRAHAM and I submitted a bipartisan resolution that reaffirmed strong congressional support for our intelligence agencies and our diplomats. This is supplemental to the work, of course, that Senator COONS and Senator FLAKE have been doing. It declares that an attack on our election system by a foreign power is a hostile act that should be met with a swift and forceful response.

Passing this resolution sends a clear message to Russia: We are united in our commitment to make sure you pay a heavy price for attacking our elections, and we are prepared to exercise our authority to impose even stronger sanctions.

If this administration won't act, Congress must.

In order to safeguard future elections, State and local officials on the frontlines of this fight must have the tools and resources they need to prevent cyber attacks.

We recently voted to provide \$380 million in election security funding to States. That was an important first step. All the States I have talked to say that was just the beginning, that they would need more resources, but it was an important first step. I worked on that with Senator LANKFORD, as well as Senator COONS and Senator LEAHY.

I will note that \$380 million is just 3 percent of the cost of one aircraft carrier. That is what it is—3 percent of the cost of one aircraft carrier. We have a foreign government that has been trying to attack our elections. We must do more.

During a recent Rules Committee hearing, State and local officials testified that more resources are needed. Last week, Vermont's secretary of state and the president of the National Association of Secretaries of State, Jim Condos, called on Congress to provide additional funds on an ongoing basis, not just when a crisis happens. This week, nearly half of our country's State attorneys general sent a letter urging Congress to appropriate more funding for election security. That is why today Senator LEAHY, Senator COONS, and I will be offering this amendment to the appropriations legislation that is before us this week that would provide additional funding for election security.

I am continuing to work with Senator LANKFORD on the Secure Elections Act, which, along with Senator GRAHAM and Senator HARRIS, now has 10 cosponsors, Democrats and Republicans, equally divided. That bill is important. Senator BLUNT has agreed to a markup in August. That is very critical to our moving forward to have legislation that puts some parameters in place, puts best practices in place, and requires audits. All of that must happen, but for now, we can't wait. We are almost 100 days away from this election.

Director of National Intelligence Coats recently reaffirmed the threat Russia poses. He said this: "Today, the digital infrastructure that serves this country is literally under attack. . . . It was in the months prior to September 2001 when, according to then-CIA director George Tenet, the system was blinking red. And here we are nearly two decades later, and I'm here to say the warning lights are blinking red again." That is from our National Intelligence Director under President Trump.

I would close with this—something that happened 95 years ago. In 1923, Joseph Stalin, then General Secretary of the Soviet Communists, was asked about a vote in the Central Committee of the party. Stalin was unconcerned

about the vote. After all, he explained that who voted was "completely unimportant." What was "extraordinarily important," he said, "was who would count the votes and how."

Now, nearly 100 years later, we have someone by the name of Vladimir Putin trying to control who counts the votes and how in our own country. This time, it is now, and it is in our elections. Those are the stakes. Election security is national security, and it is time to start acting like it.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

MR. WYDEN. Mr. President, as Senator KLOBUCHAR has noted, Democrats and Republicans are here to talk about a critically important issue; that is, protecting the franchise for our people.

I want to begin by saying that the ink is barely dry on the indictment of the Russian hackers who tried to undermine our democracy, and the President of the United States is trying to deny that it actually happened. Just put your arms around that one for a moment, colleagues. The indictment of the Russian hackers is just days old, the President's own intelligence officials are telling him that an attack on our democracy is a near certainty, and he has just not been willing to step up and prevent it. In fact, he continues to refuse to accept the basic facts of the attack the Russians perpetrated in 2016.

The fact, however, is that Americans are learning more and more about what actually happened, and it is becoming increasingly clear that what the President calls a witch hunt is turning up a lot of witches. The attack on our democracy was plotted and perpetrated by agents of the Russian Government. It came from the very top. It wasn't perpetrated by some other, unidentified country, and it wasn't some random fellow in his mom's basement; it was Russia. Somehow, the President is too mesmerized by Vladimir Putin to admit that.

The public learned from the indictments unsealed in the last several days that Russian intelligence officials hacked into the computers of the Democratic National Committee, stole data, and planted surveillance software. They were basically hoovering up voter data that belonged to one-half million Americans. They targeted our election infrastructure and searched for vulnerabilities that might have allowed them to affect the results. A Russian national with ties to Russian intelligence used what was called a "gun rights organization" to infiltrate conservative circles and sway our political judgment.

Those are the facts, colleagues, and no matter how the President twists himself into a pretzel to try to describe it otherwise, those are the realities. Our election system and our digital infrastructure are still extraordinarily vulnerable to attack. The President's own Director of National Intelligence, our former colleague, has said—not

months ago but recently—that “the lights are blinking red.”

So our colleagues Senator LEAHY and Senator KLOBUCHAR are proposing an important investment of funding to assist the States. There is no question in my mind that when looking at this challenge, this will be a challenge that benefits from the additional funds since this is a national problem. The Director of Homeland Security said in response to my question that paperless voting machines pose a “national security concern.” You know, we don’t ask Delaware or Oregon or small towns if they are dealing with an attack on their democracy. We don’t say to a small town in Delaware or Oregon: Will you figure out how to do it? We treat it as something where we come together as Americans to tackle the problem. So we are going to need additional funds for attacking this extraordinarily important challenge.

I am going to be heading home for townhall meetings. We have these sessions, throw open the doors, and everybody’s welcome. Folks are going to hear about what we are talking about in election security, and folks are going to say: Ron, what are the best ideas out there for stopping the Russians from hacking our elections?

I will say to my colleagues—we are going to talk some more about this—cyber security experts are overwhelmingly united on what is best for stopping the Russian hackers. Overwhelmingly, this country’s cyber security experts—people who aren’t Democrats or Republicans; they are people who are knowledgeable in this field—say the two things you need most are paper ballots and risk-limiting audits—those two things, paper ballots and risk-limiting audits.

Tens of millions of Americans today have no choice but to vote on unsecured machines that might as well have these words scrolled on them in Russian: “Please hack me, comrade.” That pretty much is what you get with these unsecured voting machines.

The voting machine industry—I think I talked about this with my friend from Delaware—has basically considered themselves to be above the law. They have refused to share vital information about their operations with me, the Intelligence Committee—even basic questions, which are really called issues relating to cyber hygiene. But what we know is, some of this voting technology has actually come preinstalled with remote monitoring software. The cyber security experts will tell you that is a recipe for disaster. The experts also will tell you that bar codes, ballot-marking devices, are not the heart of a solution to really secure elections.

When you ask the companies that manufacture these machines, they are ducking and weaving when they are asked even the most basic and straightforward questions about how they are protecting American voters.

Colleagues, as we move to start this extraordinarily important debate, I

want to be clear about what I think the most important challenge is. Our most important job is to build a new partnership between the States and localities and Federal election officials that actually protects American elections from getting hacked by the Russians. That is what this is all about—actually making sure we provide that added measure of assistance and security for American voters.

In the name of supporting that cause, I have proposed legislation called the PAVE Act which, in effect, says that we have to build around common sense and what the independent cyber security experts say is important—paper ballots and postelection audits. That, in my view, is the heart of what we ought to be looking for ways to support. If a polling place starts election day with a line of people out the door, it ought to end the day with a stack of paper ballots that are hack-proof—a verifiable system that the Russians cannot touch.

If the United States is going to go along with business as usual—election security status quo of paperless machines and not very many audits, not effective audits—it is nearly as bad as leaving ballot boxes on street corners in Red Square. So I am going to close this way. When we have a debate this important about election security, what it is really about is whether Americans can trust that control of our democracy is actually in their hands. The easiest way to destroy what has certainly been waning confidence Americans have in our elections is to leave election systems vulnerable to attack. That is practically a surefire way to limit voter participation, and it certainly is going to generate a new firestorm of conspiracy theories in every American election from here on.

So I say to my colleagues and Senator COONS, who really is the gold standard for working with colleagues, trying to bring people together: Find approaches that make sense for our people. He and I have talked, and I think we have agreed that we will take a good idea from anywhere in sight. If there is a good idea on this side of the aisle, we are interested. If there is a good idea over there, we are interested. The good idea here, in terms of protecting the votes of the American people who have been threatened by Russian hackers, with the evidence as recently as a few days ago with the indictments—the best way, according to people who aren’t in politics and are knowledgeable in the field, is to have paper ballots and risk-limiting audits. As long as I have the honor to represent Oregon in the U.S. Senate—we will certainly be talking about this at townhall meetings this weekend. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance that kind of approach, which I think is the surest path to blocking those Russian hackers from doing again and again what they did to us in this past election.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JOHNSON). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise to speak about an amendment that I look forward to advancing as a member of the relevant Appropriations subcommittee—in fact, the ranking Democrat. I was pleased to work in a bipartisan way to secure \$380 million in the last fiscal year that has been distributed to the States to secure our elections.

As you may have heard, some who opposed this in the Appropriations Committee, when we took it up and debated it, asked a few simple questions, which I will try to address quickly.

Aren’t elections a State and local responsibility? Why should the Federal government be providing funding for States and localities to secure their elections? It is true that elections are overwhelmingly run at the State and local levels. The cost of securing and modernizing our voting machines and voting systems will be overwhelmingly borne at the State and local levels.

Second, this \$380 million was just made available, and I don’t think it has even gone out yet. Have they used it well, and have they used it properly?

Third, why is this something we need to do now? Is there any indication that our upcoming elections are actually under threat?

Let me briefly speak to those three questions.

This morning, it was publicly reported that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, outside of a classified setting for the first time, revealed that not one, not two, not a dozen, but more than 100 American power utilities had been successfully hacked by Russian military intelligence and that air-gapped control rooms—meaning control rooms that are designed so they are not connected to the internet—in power-generating or distributing utilities around the country had been compromised by Russia. There is a level of sophistication in their invasion and interference in our physical infrastructure that is matched by their sophistication in interfering and intruding in our election infrastructure. I think the present danger is very clear and very real.

As my colleagues stated at great length, our Director of National Intelligence, Dan Coats, our former colleague, has said repeatedly that our election structure is at risk.

On July 13, Special Counsel Mueller indicted 12 Russian military officials for cyber attacks on our 2016 elections, and we know those attacks are coming again.

Michael Chertoff, the former Bush Department of Homeland Security Secretary, and Grover Norquist, long known as an advocate for reduced Federal spending, jointly wrote an editorial earlier this year—I think it was in the Washington Post. They said, and I quote, that “we can replace all paperless voting machines in the country for less than the cost of an F-22 fighter jet.”

As Senator KLOBUCHAR has said repeatedly and correctly: "Election security is national security."

Chertoff and Norquist concluded with this thought: It is not practical to expect State and local election administrators in rural Missouri or small town Maine or in my State of Delaware or in my colleague's State of Iowa to go toe-to-toe with the premier government-backed cyber mercenaries of Russia or China or North Korea. Just as Federal agencies prudently provide support for State law enforcement in dealing with terrorism, Federal officials should give guidance for support of the election cyber security threat.

My home State of Delaware is one of five with no paper trail for our election systems, and our election systems are air-gapped. I just received a letter from our State election commissioner, Elaine Manlove, who has made clear that with the \$380 million already distributed through the money made available last year, they will begin to make a downpayment on replacing our current, antiquated election machinery with those that will have a verifiable paper trail.

I have many more examples I can cite, but I will be brief because I have a colleague who has waited long for his opportunity to speak.

All States have now requested the funding, and 90 percent of the funding has been disbursed. The EAC is working with States to make sure that they are addressing cyber security issues and, in particular, replacing outdated, antiquated systems.

I will give you one of many examples. The State of Louisiana last purchased voting equipment in 2005. Its 10,000 voting machines are antiquated, and their spare parts are dwindling and are no longer being manufactured. Louisiana's secretary of state estimated the replacement cost would be between \$40 million and \$60 million. A \$3 million downpayment of Federal money is just barely enough to get Louisiana started, not enough to complete the job.

Let me close by saying that election security is not a partisan issue; it is about protecting who we are as a nation. Free and fair and regular elections define us as a democracy. Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—all Americans—who want to know that their votes are counted and our elections are free and fair should care about a Federal role in supporting States and localities as they work to ensure that our election systems are protected and our equipment can't be compromised.

This is an issue not just for the November 2018 elections but for the 2020 elections.

The amendment we hope to call up later today should not be controversial. This is about protecting our democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to bring my fellow Senators up to date on a subject that was sparked by the remarks made this morning by the minority leader. I also want to add some additional context that the minority leader left out.

He spoke on the nomination of Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. Unfortunately, he didn't come to the floor to talk about the judge's excellent qualifications, the judge's well-regarded temperament, or the judge's judicial philosophy. He didn't come to the floor to announce that he would finally extend to the judge the courtesy of a meeting, which is customary in this body. He came to speak about what he thinks will satisfy leftwing outside groups. He demanded that I sign a letter that will put the American taxpayers on the hook for a Democratic fishing expedition, and I am not going to do that.

I agree that we should have a thorough vetting process for the nominee—and we will—and that we should review materials that will reveal Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking. That is our job. We are not going to be a rubberstamp. Fortunately for us, we have immediate access to the most valuable documents that are out there that will reveal Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking. We have access to the more than 300 opinions Judge Kavanaugh authored in his 12 years on the DC Circuit, as well as to the hundreds more opinions he joined. In these opinions, he addressed some of the most significant legal issues of the past decade from the second most powerful court in the land.

This morning, the minority leader brought up a statement that I had made in 2010 in connection with Justice Kagan's Supreme Court nomination. At that time, this Senator was interested in reviewing documents from her time in the Clinton administration.

What the minority leader neglected to mention was that, unlike Judge Kavanaugh, Justice Kagan had not served as a judge before being nominated to the Supreme Court. Besides the Federal Government service she had had at the time she was nominated, she had been the dean of a law school. Other than Kagan's materials that she had submitted as part of the Senate Judiciary questionnaire for her nomination, her White House Counsel's Office and Domestic Policy Council documents had been some of the few categories of documents that could have shed light on her legal thinking since she hadn't had any judicial writings, meaning as a judge. Justice Kagan had written or joined a grand total of zero judicial opinions before her nomination. For those of us on the Senate Judiciary Committee to have carried out our constitutional advice and consent responsibilities as Senators, we had needed to better understand her legal thinking and potential jurisprudence.

Judge Kavanaugh, by contrast, has authored over 300 judicial opinions in his 12 years on the bench. That is over 300. That doesn't include the hundreds of other decisions in which he has joined an opinion or some sort of order. When you add those to the mix, those are thousands of pages of judicial writings that the American people have access to at this exact moment. You don't have to wait to get this information about Judge Kavanaugh. To the contrary, Justice Kagan, of course, had zero pages of judicial opinions. This is in addition to the 6,168 pages of records Judge Kavanaugh just included in his response to the Senate Judiciary questionnaire, which we put on the website last weekend for the whole public to view if it wants to know everything about Judge Kavanaugh as a judge and about the things of which he spoke and wrote documents about other than just his judicial opinions.

Despite the fact that Judge Kavanaugh's judicial record is much more substantial than Justice Kagan's was, I agree that we should still ask the White House for documents pertaining to Judge Kavanaugh's time in the White House Counsel's Office. My Democratic colleagues say they want the White House's records. I am pleased to let them know that in the coming weeks, the Senate will receive what will likely be the largest document production in history for a Supreme Court nomination. I expect that the Senate could receive up to a million pages of documents that will be related to Judge Kavanaugh's time in the White House Counsel's Office. We will also see the White House's nomination file for Judge Kavanaugh's 2006 nomination to the DC Circuit—where, as I have told you, he now sits—along with records from Judge Kavanaugh's time in the U.S. Office of the Independent Counsel. By comparison, we received fewer than 180,000 pages for Justice Kagan's time in two White House offices.

Let's recap. We have more than 300 of Judge Kavanaugh's actual judicial opinions to Justice Kagan's zero. We could have up to five times as many pages from his time in the White House as we received from Justice Kagan's time, and we will have those documents despite the fact that they are less necessary now than they were for Justice Kagan. In short, there will be much more transparency in this Supreme Court confirmation process than ever before.

I am ready now to send a letter to the National Archives to request relevant White House Counsel documents. I would like to do this with the ranking member, but unfortunately she has declined this request. This is unfortunate. Both sides agree that the White House Counsel documents are relevant. I would like to get them over here as quickly as possible so we can begin reviewing them.

Yet, as I noted, the Democratic leadership has already decided to oppose

Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation. They would like to slow down the process as much as possible. I think that explains why the ranking member will not sign a letter that requests documents both sides want.

I have heard that some of my Democratic colleagues would like to request all of Judge Kavanaugh's records from his time as White House Staff Secretary, but these documents are both the least relevant to Judge Kavanaugh's legal thinking and the most sensitive to the executive branch. The Staff Secretary is the in-box and out-box of the Oval Office. Passing through the Staff Secretary's office is a wide range of communications that request things like flying the flag at half-mast to somehow including daily lunch menus, to draft speeches, to sensitive national security papers.

The Staff Secretary's primary charge is not to provide his own substantive work product; the Staff Secretary makes sure that the President sees memos and policy papers that have been produced by other offices in the White House. It is a very important job. It requires someone who is smart, someone who is hard-working, and someone who is talented.

The documents that passed through Judge Kavanaugh's office while he was Staff Secretary are not particularly relevant to his legal thinking or for the consideration of whether he should be on the Supreme Court. It is like saying, in a sense, that the Senate Secretary—someone who has a very difficult and demanding job—is responsible for all of the positions taken by each of the Senate offices. It is absurd.

The Senate should focus its efforts on reviewing his tens of thousands of pages of judicial opinions and other legal writings. Not only would a broad review of Staff Secretary documents be a waste of time, but it would also be a waste of taxpayers' money.

Moreover, Staff Secretary documents contain some of the most sensitive information and advice that went directly to President Bush from a range of policy advisers.

Back in 2010, both Democrats and Republicans agreed that Justice Kagan, because of the sensitivity of the documents, shouldn't produce internal communications while she was Solicitor General.

If we are going to talk about a Kagan standard, then we need to talk about taking sensitive communications off the table. That is what all sides had agreed to in 2010 and what I will insist on now.

I appreciate the minority leader's efforts to ensure some transparency and thoroughness, but let's get right down to brass tacks: I don't think the minority leader actually wants to read the millions of pages that crossed Judge Kavanaugh's desk way back in 2004 and for probably the 3 years he held the position of Staff Secretary.

The minority leader said he will fight this nomination with everything he

has, which proves what I have been talking about, and his request proves that he is willing to do that because this bloated document request is part of that fight. This is not about anything other than obstruction—to bury us under millions and millions of pages of paper so we cannot have a confirmation vote on Judge Kavanaugh this year.

Liberal, dark money outside groups want to drag this confirmation out just as far as they can—till the end of time. I will not let them. This confirmation process should focus on Judge Kavanaugh's qualifications, not become a taxpayer-funded fishing expedition.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I am almost embarrassed to talk about what I am going to have to talk about today. Once again, in the U.S. Congress, we find ourselves only days away from causing a lapse in the National Flood Insurance Program.

The majority of Members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives understand the importance of extending this program but sadly some don't. You can lead some people to water, but you can't make them think.

Without congressional action, ordinary Americans—the people who get up every day, go to work, obey the law, pay their taxes, and try to do the right things by their kids—are going to suffer. These folks work pretty hard to earn money to cover their mortgages, to pay their insurance premiums, to put food on the table, and to hopefully have a little extra when all is said and done.

The U.S. Government made a promise to these people, these taxpaying Americans, that if they pay their flood insurance premiums, we will have their backs when they have a flood. We are about to tell them we lied. When you lie to Congress, it is a felony. When Congress lies to you, it is just politics, and that is not right.

Unless we do something, the National Flood Insurance Program, the NFIP, is going to expire on July 31. Now, unless you are a rock—only dumber—that is in 8 days, including today.

Every once in a while, Congress seems to just decide that keeping our promise to the American taxpayer isn't worth the effort. What planet did we parachute in from that we can't even maintain the status quo on something that affects the lives of millions of people and helps more than 22,000 communities across this great country?

I am standing here today because the reauthorization of the NFIP has never been more urgent. Let me say it again. We have 8 days until disaster. If the NFIP is allowed to expire on July 31, Congress is going to be sending a clear message to the 5 million hard-working Americans who count on this program,

and that message is three words: We don't care. We don't care. The unfortunate thing is, I think some—it is a small minority, but some don't.

Last September, when Texas and parts of Louisiana were still reeling from Hurricane Harvey, one Member of the U.S. Congress actually said: "The federal government is encouraging and subsidizing people to live in harm's way . . . at some point, God is telling you to move."

Give me a break. Are you kidding me?

The fact is, 50 percent of our country's population and 50 percent of our country's jobs are along our coasts and waterways. Do you really think they ought to just move? Living near water is an economic necessity. People have been doing it since the beginning of time. It is as true for us now as it was in Biblical times that our economies and our livelihoods are tied to water.

Let's take the Mississippi River that runs through my State. Each year, it sustains more than 1.3 million jobs and generates more than \$405 billion in revenue. How many jobs are tied to the 12,000 miles of U.S. coastline? What do you think would be the economic impact if everyone who lived near one of the 3.5 million miles of rivers in this great country just picked up and moved tomorrow—as if they could afford to do so. Give me a break. I hope we never have to find out what would happen, but one thing is certain, nobody is going to move before July 31, when the NFIP expires, just because some Members of Congress erroneously think they ought to.

I want to make two other points. First, if Congress allows the NFIP to expire, it is going to stall thousands and thousands and thousands of home closings. That is right. Because the law requires it, many lenders require homeowners to carry flood insurance. If there is no NFIP, then there is no flood insurance. If there is no flood insurance, then there is no home sale.

The last time Congress chose to do nothing and let the National Flood Insurance Program expire, the NFIP lapsed for a total of 53 days. That was in 2010. Over those 2 months, each and every day, 1,400 home sales were canceled. That is every day. That is not total. That is every day. Think about how that is going to impact our economy. Isn't that special?

Just when we finally get the U.S. economy moving again, we are going to step on it by letting the National Flood Insurance Program expire. No wonder many Americans say—and I hear it all the time—yes, there are some good Members of Congress. We just can't figure out what they are good for.

I am also tired of hearing that the NFIP is being abused by rich people for their beach homes. I hear it all the time. That is a bunch of bovine waste. As a matter of fact, 98.5 percent—almost 99 percent—of all NFIP policies are in counties with a median household income of less than \$100,000, and 62

percent are in counties with a median household income below the national average of \$54,000.

You don't have to live near a body of water. If you get 22 inches of rain in 2 days, you are going to flood, even if you live on Pikes Peak. For those who live in a coastal State like my State or elsewhere on a floodplain, the reality is, the NFIP is the only place you can turn to protect your property. Floods are the most common and the most costly natural disaster. The damage that is done by hail, fire, wind, or a fallen tree is covered by a homeowner's insurance but not a flood. If you have a flood, it is not covered by your homeowner's policy.

The Federal Government made a promise. We promised more than 5 million Americans—half a million in my State alone—that we would have their backs. We promised them that if they would pay their hard-earned money into the National Flood Insurance Program through premiums, if they flooded, we would cover it. It is time we get our act together and keep that promise. The NFIP is just too important to be used as a political football. For millions of people in this country, in my State and elsewhere, this program is the only way they can protect their most valuable asset—their home—and, at a minimum, we owe those hard-working Americans some peace of mind.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 3128, my bill and the bill of BILL CASSIDY, the senior Senator from Louisiana. It will extend the National Flood Insurance Program for 6 months to get us through hurricane season. That is all it does. It just maintains the status quo. It doesn't change anything. It just says the National Flood Insurance Program we have today is going to be extended for 6 months to get us through hurricane season, while we in the Senate and in the House continue to work on a reform bill that would rework the NFIP and turn it into a program that looks like somebody designed it on purpose. That is all my bill and Senator CASSIDY's bill does.

We simply can't afford to let the folks in our at-risk communities down, especially those exposed during hurricane season. Truthfully, they deserve better from us.

NOMINATION OF JOHN FLEMING

Mr. President, I want to speak very briefly about a friend of mine who has been nominated by President Trump for a very important position in the Federal Government. This friend's name is John Fleming, and he has been nominated by the President to be Assistant Secretary for the Economic Development Administration at the Department of Commerce.

Dr. Fleming currently serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Health IT Reform at the Department of Health and Human Services, and he has done a wonderful job. He has done such a great job that the President has asked him

to take on this program at the Department of Commerce.

Dr. Fleming is a public servant's public servant. He is a four-term Member of the U.S. House of Representatives. He is a physician. He went to the University of Mississippi, undergraduate and medical school. He is an entrepreneur and businessman. Aside from his family medical practice, his businesses support about 600 jobs in my State.

After Dr. Fleming finished at Ole Miss and finished med school, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He served there in the Medical Corps.

During his time in the House of Representatives, Dr. Fleming was a champion of our economy, a champion for families, and a champion for our veterans. He is a skilled physician, he is an experienced entrepreneur, and he is a good guy. I know Dr. John Fleming and his family well, and I am honored to be able to endorse his nomination.

Just to show you that he is well-rounded—I forgot this—John also has a black belt in karate. I am not sure when he has time, but he is a well-rounded guy.

I have no doubt—none whatsoever—that Dr. Fleming is well qualified to be a very fine Assistant Secretary of the Economic Development Administration, and I endorse his nomination categorically and unconditionally.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, we are on the verge of the 1-year mark since the U.S. Senate attempted to take away healthcare from 30 million Americans and was told no by the American public.

For virtually the entire time, since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, Republicans in the House and in the Senate engaged in an exercise that was futile while President Obama was in office but then was made possible by the election of Donald Trump—that was the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, which extended care to 20 million Americans who weren't guaranteed that health insurance would actually cover the things they needed and protected people who were sick or people with preexisting conditions from discrimination.

When Republicans finally took over, they realized they had spent a whole lot of time criticizing the Affordable Care Act but not a lot of time figuring out what would come next, and most of 2017 was spent in an embarrassing series of proposals that, according to the Congressional Budget Office, would uninsured somewhere in the neighborhood of 20 to 30 million people.

Finally, when a vote was called on the floor of the Senate, just enough Republican Senators chose to side with the American people, who want to maintain the protections of the Affordable Care Act and work to perfect it, that the bill failed by one vote. That 1-

year mark will occur this weekend on Saturday.

So a few of us wanted to come to the floor today to talk about what has happened since that fateful vote a year ago that was, frankly, celebrated all across this country, as folks who were deeply fearful that their healthcare was going to be ripped away from them by the Congress realized they might be able to rely on it for at least another year.

Let me set the stage, first by reminding people of the promises that were made. This is President Trump shortly after his election and just before his swearing in. He said:

We're going to have insurance for everybody. People covered under the law can expect to have great healthcare . . . much less expensive and much better.

That is a clear promise that the President made: Everybody is going to have insurance. It is going to be less expensive, and it is going to be better—more insurance, less expensive, better quality.

The vote that took place a year ago this Saturday would have done exactly the opposite. It would have kicked 30 million people off of insurance. It would have driven up costs for millions of Americans—especially those people with preexisting conditions. Coverage would have been much worse, not much better, in part because people with preexisting conditions wouldn't be able to access care.

So this promise never came true because of the vote that we took a year ago this Saturday.

But, occasionally, the President does say something that is true. This is a picture of the celebration that the House of Representatives had at the White House the day they voted on the proposal that would rip away healthcare from 30 million Americans, before the vote that took place here in the Senate. There are a lot of smiling faces of Members of Congress who were so excited that people who had cancer or people who had diabetes would be unable to get healthcare insurance.

This quote is not actually from this press conference. It is from a rally that the President held just a few weeks ago. He was talking about the fact that JOHN MCCAIN and some others voted against that proposal on the Senate floor, which caused it to fail. He said—these are the President's words: "It's all right, because we have essentially gutted it"—the Affordable Care Act—"anyway." "It's all right, because we have essentially gutted it anyway."

So that summarizes what has happened since the failed vote on the floor of the Senate a year ago. President Trump and his Republican friends in Congress, all smiling behind him, have gutted the Affordable Care Act, not because they want better healthcare for people but because they are just angry that they couldn't get the votes to do it here in Congress. So they are doing it by other means.

So a few of us are going to be on the floor to talk about what has happened in the last year.

I actually think that most of my colleagues do want better healthcare for their constituents, but I don't understand how any of what has happened, either through legislative act or through administrative action, gets us there—gets us to that promise that President Trump made in January of 2017.

Here is what is going on. First, the President signed an Executive order saying that all of his agencies should start to take their own actions to unwind the protections of the Affordable Care Act. Then he stopped the marketing for the Affordable Care Act so that less people would know about the options that were available to them. Then the President came to Congress and worked with Republicans to take away one of the most important pillars of the Affordable Care Act—the requirement that healthy people buy insurance. That action alone will result in 13 million people losing insurance and rates going up for 10 million Americans.

Most recently the President authorized the sale of junk insurance plans all across this country—plans that don't have to cover mental health or prescription drugs or maternity care.

He then cut funding even deeper for the personnel that help you find what insurance is right for you, and he instructed the people that remain to push Americans onto the junk plans.

Then the President sent his lawyers to court to argue that Congress actually can't protect people with preexisting conditions because it is unconstitutional, which would wipe out all of the protections that people enjoy today.

So it is really no mystery as to why, as the 2019 premium increases are coming out, they are catastrophic. They are catastrophic. Fourteen States have insurance companies that have requested premium increases of 10 to 20 percent. Connecticut is one of those. Five States have insurance companies that requested premium increases of 30 percent or more. Think about that for a second: 30 percent or more. Who can afford a 30-percent or a 40-percent increase in premiums? One insurance company requested a 94-percent increase in rates.

In 21 of the States that have rates filed already, the insurers said the reason they are doing this—the reason they are passing along enormous premium increases—is because of the sabotage campaign that is being run by the President and by this Congress, all or most of it occurring since the failure of the repeal vote a year ago.

It is all right, says the President. We didn't need to repeal the Affordable Care Act. That vote that we are marking the 1-year anniversary of doesn't really matter because we have essentially gutted it—the Affordable Care Act, the American healthcare system—anyway.

So, finally, before I turn this over to the ranking member on the HELP

Committee, I just want to talk about the next phase of the sabotage campaign.

If Republicans in Congress can't get the American people to support a legislative act to repeal the Affordable Care Act, the next hope is for the courts to do it. That is why the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh is so critical to this continued campaign of trying to undermine the Affordable Care Act, because you probably can't get the majority of Members of Congress to wipe away protections for people with preexisting conditions, but maybe you can get the Supreme Court to do it.

There is a case that I just referenced that the Trump administration is supporting, moving its way through the courts, that would invalidate—constitutionally invalidate—Congress's protections for people with preexisting conditions. These are people with cancer, diabetes, heart disease, mental illness, cerebral palsy, Crohn's Disease, ALS, addiction, Lupus, epilepsy, Parkinson's, and the list goes on.

President Trump made clear during the campaign that he wasn't going to pick a judge in the mold of John Roberts, who would uphold the Affordable Care Act. He was going to pick judges that would rule with him to strike down the Affordable Care Act. That is also probably why he outsourced the decision on whom to pick for this vacant slot to political groups like the Heritage Foundation.

So the expectation is that Brett Kavanaugh will deliver one of those five needed votes to strike down the laws on the books, which Congress can't find the votes to override, protecting people with preexisting conditions. The Supreme Court could take away your healthcare if you have a history of any of these diseases, and, if that happens, the results are lethal. If you have metastatic cancer and you don't have the protection in the law that says insurance companies can't charge you more because you are sick, a recent study shows that you will be charged a rate of \$142,000 higher than what you pay today. If you are an individual with diabetes, your increase could be 137 percent on top of what you are paying now.

So these are the stakes. These are the stakes as we prepare to vote on Judge Kavanaugh's nomination, and it is all in service of this very intentional, very deliberate, very planful campaign of sabotage.

A year ago this Saturday the American people got their way, and this body decided not to repeal the Affordable Care Act because people like the fact that 20 million people have insurance. People like the fact that people with preexisting conditions are protected. That night, the American people got their way, but since then, the President and this Congress have been working to undermine it, and the next step in that plan is the elevation of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. It is important for us to come to

the floor and explain what the stakes are.

I yield is floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I wish to thank the Senator from Connecticut. I, too, join him in being very proud, as we were a year ago, to see Congress stand with families across the country who did not want to see their healthcare rolled back.

A year ago, as Senator MURPHY said, President Trump tried to make good on his campaign promise to repeal the Affordable Care Act and to jeopardize healthcare for millions of people. A year ago, the President tried to jam TrumpCare through Congress. It was a harmful, mean-spirited bill that would have spiked premiums and gutted Medicaid and scrapped protections for people with preexisting conditions, which would put families back at the mercy of big insurance companies.

But people across the country stood up, they spoke out, and they made it absolutely clear that they did not want President Trump to take away their healthcare or give power back to those insurance companies.

During that debate, I heard personal stories from patients and families all over my State of Washington who were concerned about TrumpCare because it would make it harder to get the care they needed.

I heard stories like Julie's. Julie has a genetic condition. As a result of that, she has had four—four—different types of cancer. She has had four different organs removed during treatment. She has had her diet severely restricted, and her life has dramatically changed. But she is a fighter. She had excellent care, and she ultimately won each of those four battles with cancer.

However, without protections for people with preexisting conditions, her healthcare costs could skyrocket. If President Trump had his way, Julie could not get the care she needed, and, by the way, she is not the only one.

I also heard from families like the family of a woman named Vanessa. When Vanessa was pregnant, she learned that her daughter would be born with significant health challenges. In fact, her daughter Cheyenne had her first surgery when she was just 20 days old, and she would have two more before her very first birthday. Even though Cheyenne was born with preexisting conditions that would be costly to treat for years to come, Vanessa, her mom, was able to get insurance through our State exchange and get her daughter the care she needed. But if President Trump had his way, that might not be possible.

Last year, in the midst of the TrumpCare debate, I shared Vanessa's story, Julie's story, and many stories from families in Washington State, and I heard even more that I would love to share. People from other States across the country were also reaching out and letting their Senators know how damaging TrumpCare would be for their

family and urging them to vote against it. It worked.

Last year we came together and gave President Trump's healthcare repeal scheme a big thumbs down. Unfortunately, that has not stopped President Trump from doing everything he can to sabotage families' healthcare from the Oval Office.

When he couldn't jam through TrumpCare, instead he jammed through a partisan tax bill that gave cuts to big insurance companies and drug companies and paid for them with steps that even his former Health and Human Services Secretary confessed would drive up families' premiums.

He slashed investments that help people understand their healthcare options and get coverage.

He handed power back to the insurance companies by expanding loopholes for junk plans and making it easier to ignore patient protections, including protections, by the way, for women, for seniors, and for people with preexisting conditions.

The Trump administration is even refusing to defend preexisting protections in court, both abandoning its duty to defend the law and ignoring the will of the people across the country who want them to fight for these protections.

While President Trump has broken a lot of promises, it is clear that he has never wavered in his promise to undermine healthcare for our families, and he has never failed to put insurance companies ahead of patients.

That is why his decision to nominate Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court is such an alarming omen for families' healthcare.

As a candidate, President Trump left no question that he would nominate far-right Supreme Court Justices who would strike down the Affordable Care Act and jeopardize care for millions of families. To be sure that candidates met that extreme ideological standard, he had them vetted by extreme, ideological conservative groups.

We know that President Trump chose Judge Kavanaugh because he has no doubt that Kavanaugh will support his efforts to sabotage family healthcare and make it harder for people to get the care they need.

We know that preexisting condition protections are on the line.

We know that stopping Kavanaugh's confirmation isn't a matter of partisan politics. For many families in our country, it is a matter of life and death.

We know we can stop it if people across this country do exactly what they did to beat TrumpCare—stand up, speak out, and make clear that families who didn't want their healthcare stripped away last year don't want it stripped away this year either. I have heard from many families concerned about this, and I know others are sharing their stories as well.

So I hope that our Republican colleagues are listening even more closely

than they were last year and that more of them will join us on the side of patients and families, not the President on the side of insurance companies.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues from Washington and Connecticut for being here, for speaking out, and for being so remarkable in their persistence in defending America's concerns about healthcare. I want to add my voice for just a few moments, if I might.

Let me look back 8 years to when I first joined the Senate in 2010. At that point, the Affordable Care Act was barely a year old. Since then, in the early years of the Affordable Care Act, we saw some very positive patterns: More Americans gained access to health insurance; the growth of healthcare costs slowed; insurance markets put in place under the ACA proved to be resilient, despite repeated challenges. As a result of the ACA, 20 million more Americans, including 38,000 Delawareans, gained access to high-quality, comprehensive healthcare coverage.

It is through the ACA exchange that my own family and I get our healthcare, and so many others in Delaware have a chance to get access to healthcare. The 190,000 people, in my little State of 900,000 people, who have preexisting conditions no longer had to worry about being denied coverage, and lifetime caps were a thing of the past. This matters; it has saved lives.

Just listen briefly to the story of Nicole from my little hometown of Hockessin, DE, a small farming town of just a few thousand people. Nicole's 3-year-old daughter was born with cystic fibrosis, a horrible disease that robs children and people of the ability to breathe. Nicole's 3-year-old daughter with cystic fibrosis spent at least an hour a day getting breathing treatments from her mother. At \$5,000 a month for her medications—not cheap—Nicole was confident that without the ACA she would have exceeded her annual caps and her medical expenses well before the end of the year.

Nicole, in reaching out to me, made it clear that without the consumer protections of the Affordable Care Act, she would have had one of three choices: hope she would qualify for Medicaid—unlikely, due to her income; go into debt to pay for her daughter's treatments; or stop giving her daughter some of the medication she depends on to save her life. All of that assumed that her daughter's cystic fibrosis wasn't considered a preexisting condition that would prevent her from getting any insurance at all. Because of that circumstance, Nicole's story exemplifies the life-changing gains and positive trends that the ACA provided.

Unfortunately, there were some other challenges as well, which I will summarize quickly, that have developed over time.

Let me transition to where we are today. Today we are in a place where, just a year ago, consistent, repeated efforts after the 2016 election by Republicans in Congress to repeal without a plan to replace the ACA resulted in a situation where, as my colleague from Connecticut has laid out, the Trump administration has done its best to roll back ways in which progress was made to extend quality, affordable healthcare to more Americans.

After a number of efforts to repeal the law failed last year, thanks to the American people who stood up and had their voices heard, the administration has decided to take a different approach—a slow and steady unraveling and undermining of the protections that made the ACA work.

It started with a decision to stop cost-sharing reduction payments, which help working families afford their premiums and access care. It continued when they changed the rules and encouraged people to sign up for plans that didn't have all the benefits and consumer protections of the ACA—really, junk plans—which made it possible to bring back discrimination against women and those with preexisting conditions. It culminated last month with something that was done in a fly-by-night way and may not have been visible at all to my constituents and viewers: a decision to no longer defend the core components of the ACA in court, including protections for those with preexisting conditions, in a lawsuit brought by 20 attorneys general from States that overwhelmingly opposed the ACA. This decision was so shocking that three career Justice Department attorneys withdrew from the case, and one with over 20 years' experience resigned from his job. Make no mistake, this was the administration sabotaging the ACA and our healthcare system. President Trump even admitted at a campaign event, just cited by my colleague from Connecticut, that he had gutted the ACA.

This may resonate with the President's base. It may resonate with people he hopes will vote him back into office in the future election. But for millions of families across the country and in my home State, losing protections against preexisting condition discrimination is a death sentence.

It would be devastating for Nicole and her daughter, whom I described before. It would be devastating for Kim from my hometown of residence, Wilmington, a thyroid cancer survivor who is now able to get insurance. Because her cancer isn't considered a preexisting condition under the Affordable Care Act, she is not subject to preexisting condition discrimination. In my small State of Delaware, gutting protections for preexisting conditions would leave one in five at risk of skyrocketing health insurance costs or losing coverage altogether.

This lawsuit impacts every corner of America's healthcare system, and the

fact that our administration is not defending the law of the land is a shocking development. It impacts not just those who get their healthcare through the ACA exchanges. It would impact 150 million Americans who get their health insurance through their employer because it would eliminate protections against lifetime and annual limits on care. It would impact seniors on Medicare who would see increased prescription drug costs. It would impact Americans who depend on free preventive services, like cancer screenings and flu shots, because those policy components of the ACA would be eliminated. It would impact young people who would lose the right to stay on their parents' health insurance until age 26.

These are just a few of the devastating impacts if the Texas v. United States lawsuit is successful in ripping out what is left of the protections of the ACA. It would have a real and tangible impact on families in my State of Delaware and across our country. That is why I am glad to support a resolution proposed by my colleagues Senators MANCHIN, CASEY, McCASKILL, and others to defend the constitutionality of preexisting condition protections in our healthcare system. This is critical to the well-being and the health of the families we represent.

My Democratic colleagues and I know the ACA was not perfect when passed. I have heard from small business owners in my home State about some of the limitations due to increases in cost and the ways in which they wish we had a more robust tax credit for small businesses, ways they wish we would work together to perfect the ACA. That is why I came to the floor time and again in my first 4 years here, seeking colleagues across the aisle who were willing to work with us to make the Affordable Care Act better.

Instead of working to tear down the ACA, we should have been working to address challenges with affordability and coverage, increasing tax credits for small businesses, and making it stronger and more sustainable. Instead of sabotaging the care millions of Americans have depended on, we should have ensured there was more competition in the marketplace, especially in small States like my own. I wish we had, instead, taken a path of pursuing commonsense regulatory reforms and cost containment efforts to slow the rate of growth of healthcare costs.

It is not too late for that. It is still not impossible that we could set aside the divisive partisan rhetoric and that this administration will abandon its underhanded attempts to sabotage this healthcare law and, instead, focus on pursuing constructive, bipartisan fixes.

The bottom line is the Affordable Care Act has helped millions of Americans—like Nicole and Kim, whose stories I shared with you—live healthier and more secure lives. I am not optimistic, but I insist on remaining hope-

ful that there is still time for us to do our job on a bipartisan basis and secure healthcare for all of America.

As happened roughly a year ago next month, the floor of this Senate can still be moved by the voices of Americans who would say to this administration: Stop your refusal to defend the ACA. Let's move forward in a positive way, together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I join my Democratic colleagues to condemn the Trump administration's efforts to sabotage the Affordable Care Act.

Not so long ago, Donald Trump ran for President, promising better, cheaper healthcare for everyone. But instead of making anything better, President Trump is making everything in this regard worse.

Big corporations are raking in trillion-dollar tax cuts while the forgotten Americans the President promised to protect are drowning in higher premiums, higher deductibles, and higher prescription drug costs. It is time to call out who is responsible for those soaring healthcare costs.

Make no mistake, while the media is riveted on the President's every tweet and the Russia investigation's every turn, the Trump administration is doing everything it can to make healthcare less affordable and less accessible to the American people.

When you turn on the news, you don't hear about the millions of Americans who have lost their coverage under President Trump's watch. You don't hear about how prices for the top 10 diabetes drugs have spiked over 25 percent, despite the President's wild claims that drug companies will voluntarily lower their prices. You will not hear about the administration's cynical efforts to destabilize our insurance markets and send premiums skyrocketing, like the Health and Human Services Department's recent freezing of the risk adjustment program.

Look, healthcare policy may be complicated, but there is nothing complicated about the idea that healthcare is a human right. There is nothing controversial about the idea that cancer patients shouldn't be price gouged as they battle the worst illness of their life. There is nothing radical about the idea that in the most prosperous country on Earth, every American deserves quality, affordable healthcare.

I know my Republican colleagues have no desire to remind voters how they spent the past year, but the American people aren't going to forget it. They aren't going to forget how many times Republicans spent in a year pushing policies that would have left 32 million people uninsured, with vote after vote after vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They aren't going to forget how Republicans tried to defund Planned Parenthood and deny millions of lower income women access to basic care.

They aren't going to forget how TrumpCare would have slapped older consumers with a punishing age tax and eliminated the Affordable Care Act's essential health benefits provision, which requires all health plans to cover basic things like prescription drugs, maternity care, and visits to specialists. They aren't going to forget how TrumpCare slashed tax credits that helped middle-class families purchase coverage or how it would have ended Medicaid as we know it, abandoning seniors in nursing homes, pregnant women, disabled Americans, and the most vulnerable.

Nor will Americans forget how President Trump turned his back on patients with preexisting conditions—which basically means someone had an illness in their life or was born with a birth defect and, therefore, had what insurance companies considered to be a preexisting condition that they could discriminate against and either not provide insurance coverage or have skyrocketing costs in order to get the coverage.

As a candidate, and then as President, Trump promised again and again that he would uphold protections for preexisting conditions. He went so far as to say that TrumpCare would be "every bit as good on pre-existing conditions as Obamacare." So much for that. The Trump administration is now, as we speak, arguing in a Federal court that these protections are unconstitutional, and you can guess what Republican colleagues in Congress are doing about it—absolutely nothing.

Instead of working to make healthcare more affordable, they are cheerleading efforts by the Trump administration to push junk insurance plans on consumers, ignoring the attacks on our health insurance markets that have sent premiums skyrocketing, and standing in silence as the Trump administration makes the case that the Affordable Care Act's protections for preexisting conditions are unconstitutional.

Republicans' reckless abandonment of families with preexisting conditions is even more concerning, given President Trump's nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. This is a judge with a long history of ruling against consumers, siding with corporate interests, and assailing the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act. If Republicans were really concerned about protecting patients with preexisting conditions, they would put the brakes on this nomination. Instead, they have left the health and financial security of millions of patients with preexisting conditions in the President's hands.

There are nearly 3.8 million people in my home State of New Jersey with preexisting conditions. I have had the opportunity to meet with some of them in recent months. They are outraged that we are even having this debate. They are afraid this President could take us back to a time when having a

history of asthma or diabetes meant being denied coverage or dropping your plan at any moment.

Let me tell you about the folks I met with recently in Belleville, NJ. I heard from Ann, who is a survivor of sexual assault and today suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. If President Trump gets his way, insurers could once again charge her more for coverage. I can't think of a clearer instance of victim-blaming than charging victims of sexual assault higher premiums because of the trauma they endured.

Then there is Mirnaly, who was 7 months pregnant when she suffered her first stroke. Years later, she suffered another stroke while caring for her autistic son. Without the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies could deny coverage to moms like her who have had complicated pregnancies.

And of course there is 4-year-old Ethan, who is more concerned about which dinosaur to play with than the pacemaker that is keeping him alive. Before the Affordable Care Act, children like Ethan were blacklisted from insurance companies for life. How do you tell a 4-year-old that his President no longer believes in protecting children like him? I wish my Republican colleagues could answer that question for Ann, Mirnaly, and for Ethan—as a matter of fact, for all of us.

Fortunately, the American people are smarter than the majority gives them credit for. They know what is at stake. They know who is responsible for soaring prescription drug costs, for sky-high deductibles, for shrinking paychecks, and for soaring insurance premiums. It is the people in charge.

The Republican Congress has had ample time to deliver better, cheaper health coverage to all Americans. Instead, they have used every moment to try to force consumers to pay more for less care. They have refused to protect patients with preexisting conditions. They have shown zero interest in helping struggling families pay their bills.

They have handed trillion-dollar tax cuts to big corporations and wealthy CEOs. Big old corporations aren't using this windfall to raise wages. Health insurance companies aren't using this money to reduce premiums. Drug companies aren't using this money to lower prices.

Republicans said the Trump tax cuts would grow paychecks and solve all of our economic problems. Thus far, corporations have spent \$650 billion buying back their own stock while workers' wages shrink in the face of soaring costs. Republicans promised the Sun and the Moon with these tax cuts, but here on planet Earth, we know that trickle-down economics doesn't work. In all my years serving the people of New Jersey, I have never seen a corporate tax cut pay for a colonoscopy or cover a cancer patient's prescription drugs.

Americans deserve real solutions that will protect their families from

rising premiums, deductibles, and prescription drug bills. Democrats are committed to delivering on those solutions. We have always been crystal clear about what motivates our work on healthcare. We believe that all Americans deserve affordable healthcare, no matter where they live, how much money they make, or what healthcare conditions they face. That is what I have spent my life fighting for, and I won't stop until we achieve universal coverage for every man, woman, and child across this great Nation. In 2018, voters are going to remember who fought to protect affordable healthcare and who worked relentlessly to undermine it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3407 AND 3430 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3399

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up en bloc and reported by number: Schatz amendment No. 3407; Kennedy amendment No. 3430. I further ask consent that following the remarks of Senators Baldwin, Durbin, Schatz, and Kennedy, the Senate vote in relation to the Schatz and Kennedy amendments in the order listed and that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendments prior to the votes.

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

The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3407 and 3430 en bloc to amendment No. 3399.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3407

(Purpose: To provide for a report on facilities of the Department of the Interior damaged by certain volcanic eruptions)

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

DAMAGE TO DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR FACILITIES BY VOLCANIC ERUPTION

SEC. _____. (a) Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to Congress a report on each facility and related infrastructure of the Department of the Interior damaged by a volcanic eruption covered by a major disaster declared by the President in calendar year 2018 in accordance with section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) (referred to in this section as a "covered facility").

(b) The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an inventory of all covered facilities;

(2) a description of—

(A) any closures of covered facilities; and

(B) the estimated impact on visitorship to covered facilities open to the public as a result of a volcanic eruption; and

(3) a plan—

(A) to restore or replace covered facilities; and

(B) to restore visitorship levels to covered facilities open to the public to historic visitorship levels.

(c) In preparing the plan required under subsection (b)(3), the Secretary of the Interior shall—

(1) engage the community in which the covered facility is located, including the State and units of local government; and

(2) include the estimated costs of carrying out the activities described in the plan.

AMENDMENT NO. 3430

(Purpose: To provide amounts for inspection of foreign seafood manufacturers and field examinations of imported seafood)

On page 370, line 20, insert “, of which no less than \$15,000,000 shall be used for inspections of foreign seafood manufacturers and field examinations of imported seafood” after “Affairs”.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, we expect these votes to occur shortly after 6 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

HEALTHCARE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues because this week marks the 1-year anniversary of Senator MCCAIN's casting the deciding vote against the healthcare repeal legislation.

I, too, voted against that legislation, as I did on a number of very partisan efforts by President Trump and congressional Republicans. I did so because the people of Wisconsin did not send me to Washington to take away people's healthcare coverage. They have consistently sent a clear message that they want us to work across the party aisle to make things better and not worse.

As I said throughout last year's debate and have said to this day, the people of Wisconsin want both parties in Congress to work together to make things better by stabilizing the health insurance market, making healthcare more affordable, and taking on rising prescription drug prices.

I strongly believe that if both parties look past the partisan debate in Washington, we can find common ground on solutions that work for the American people. Each and every one of the healthcare repeal bills that were pushed by the President and congressional Republicans faced opposition from the American people because all of them would have done the same thing—they would have taken healthcare coverage away from millions of Americans and made people pay more for less care. They would have gutted protections for those with preexisting conditions. They would have forced older adults to pay an age tax. They would have cut benefits for Medicaid for our most vulnerable people, like senior citizens and even our veterans. Put simply, this would have taken us back to the days when insurance companies set the rules.

Wisconsin families and families across our entire country let their voices be heard to the Congress, people like Chelsey from Seymour, WI, whose daughter Zoe was born with a congenital heart defect and had to have open heart surgery within 5 days of her birth. Chelsey wrote to me and said: “I'm pleading to you as a mother to fight for the . . . kids in Wisconsin with preexisting health conditions.”

Together, we fought to protect the guaranteed healthcare protections that people depend on. Together, we fought the repeal plans to cut and cap Medicaid, putting care at risk for everyone who depends on it, from a loved one who depends on Medicaid for nursing care, to a disabled child who relies on Medicaid funding at school. Together, we fought repeal plans that would have increased the number of uninsured Americans.

Even defeating the legislative efforts that would have made things worse for our families didn't end the threat to the American people. President Trump has been trying to do what congressional Republicans couldn't. He has been sabotaging our healthcare system by undermining the guaranteed health protections and access to affordable care. He ended the critical cost-sharing reduction payments that make healthcare more affordable for almost 90,000 Wisconsinites. His administration again slashed funding to States for outreach efforts that help more people sign up for healthcare. Trusted navigator programs like those in Wisconsin have had their funding cut by nearly 90 percent in the last 2 years. This will mean fewer people in rural Wisconsin will receive the support they need to obtain affordable coverage.

President Trump's sabotage of the healthcare market has created severe instability and already contributed to a 36-percent premium spike in Wisconsin this year.

This damage is not enough for Trump's administration, as it has also proposed a plan to allow insurance companies to sell what we call junk plans that could increase costs and reduce access to quality coverage for millions of Americans, harm people with preexisting health conditions, and force premium increases on older adults. These junk plans once again let big insurance companies write the rules and could exclude basic care, including hospitalization, prescription drugs, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and maternity care.

It still does not end there. Legislative repeal efforts and executive branch sabotage have now moved to the judicial branch. Wisconsin's Governor and attorney general sued to strike down the entire Affordable Care Act last month. Last month, the Trump administration supported this repeal effort by going to court to take away guaranteed protections and raise costs for Americans with preexisting conditions. If the lawsuit succeeds, insurance companies will once again be able to discriminate against people with preexisting conditions by denying them coverage or charging exorbitant premiums.

President Trump is threatening guaranteed and affordable healthcare coverage for more than 133 million Americans and over 2 million Wisconsinites with preexisting conditions. In fact, as a Kaiser Health report made clear last

week, if the Affordable Care Act's protections for people with preexisting medical conditions are struck down in court, Wisconsin is among a number of States that have the most to lose. According to Kaiser, one out of every four Wisconsinites has a preexisting condition, and they cannot afford to have the healthcare they depend on threatened. When I was a child, I was branded with the words "preexisting condition" after a serious childhood illness.

I am going to continue fighting to make sure that no family has to choose between helping their child get better or going bankrupt. Again, the people of Wisconsin did not send me to Washington to take away people's healthcare, and I will continue my fight against these relentless efforts to make things worse for Wisconsin families.

This issue is personal to me. I know it is very personal to the individuals and families in Wisconsin. No parent, no grandparent, no foster parent should lie awake at night wondering if the healthcare they have for their child today will be there tomorrow. That is why I will continue my work to protect it.

Last year, the American people sent a loud message to Washington. I heard it. And they are sending the same simple message today: Protect our care.

I yield, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is interesting—I listened to my colleague from Wisconsin, which is my neighboring State, talk about her personal and family experience with healthcare. I think every one of us has a story—it is our own personal story—or knows somebody in our family who has a medical history, tells a story of whether they had the proper care at the proper time, whether the family could afford it. And then there is the big question: Can you buy health insurance if you have a child with diabetes, if you have a wife who is suffering from cancer and survived? Can you buy health insurance?

The interesting thing—I bet the Senator found this because I know she is traveling all over her State of Wisconsin—this issue doesn't go away because people's worry over it doesn't go away. They are worried about whether they can afford to buy good health insurance. They are worried about whether they can afford to buy prescription drugs. It is that insecurity, that economic insecurity about healthcare that really continues to make this the biggest issue year in, year out in America.

I thank my colleague from Wisconsin for telling her story and for really giving my speech. So I am going to condense it and just say a few things she might not have touched on. And I thank her for her contribution earlier today.

It happened in my life at a very early age. My wife and I got married. I was

in law school. God sent us a beautiful little girl, and she had a very serious medical problem. We were living here in Washington, DC, and didn't have health insurance. I want to tell you that you have never felt more helpless in your life than to be a new father with that brand-new baby who desperately needs medical care and not have health insurance. I will never forget it as long as I live. I lived in such fear from that point forward of not having health insurance coverage that I did crazy things—getting health insurance at two different places of employment just to make sure I never lost it. It scared me that much, and I still remember that fear. I wonder if the people who are debating this issue about the Affordable Care Act ever lived through it themselves, because if they did, they wouldn't be standing here saying that we can do away with the Affordable Care Act.

We know what happens if you eliminate the Affordable Care Act. Millions of Americans lose their health insurance. Millions of Americans find health insurance not affordable. Millions of Americans are desperate for protection, no longer have it, and can't access the most basic, quality healthcare that every American should expect.

We had this debate. A new President came in and said: The first thing I am going to do is to get rid of ObamaCare, to get rid of the Affordable Care Act. Well, the obvious question was this: Could he do it?

It looked like he might be able to. The Republicans controlled the House and the Senate, and when they were in the majority with a Democratic President, at least on 50 or 60 different occasions, the House Republicans voted to abolish ObamaCare.

It was pointless because the Senate wasn't going to take it up, and the President would never sign that bill into law, but you knew what the sentiment was. We are getting rid of it. We are getting rid of it. We heard about that year after year. We passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010, and for year after year all the Republicans could say was this: Get rid of it. Get rid of it.

Then came that moment when, figuratively, the dog caught the bus, and they had an opportunity to present on the floor of the Senate an alternative. What is it that you want to replace the Affordable Care Act with? We said to our Republican friends: You are elected to this body as legislators. Let's see your legislation.

It turns out that they didn't have any. They just wanted to make sure ObamaCare was gone, but they couldn't find a replacement, and they couldn't answer the basic question as to how they would provide health insurance—or affordable health insurance—for the millions of people who would lose coverage.

I remember the night—it was early in the morning it was—when we had the vote—the vote—on whether to eliminate ObamaCare. Two Republican Senators had already voted with us, but

the critical third vote walked in that door, and his name was JOHN MCCAIN. He stood in that well and give a "no" sign with his thumb, and that was it. The Affordable Care Act lived for another day.

Thank goodness he did it. Thank goodness he and two of his colleagues had the courage to do it, to stand up and say: If you can't replace ObamaCare with something better, for goodness' sake, stick with it, fix it. That didn't happen.

After that vote, there was a determined effort at every level of the Trump administration to do away with ObamaCare. If they couldn't kill it on the floor of the Senate, they were going to kill it in many different ways.

They limited the period of time when you signed up to renew your health insurance. They wanted to have fewer and fewer days available, hoping fewer and fewer people would take advantage of it.

They eliminated the navigators, the advisers who help people pick the right health insurance plan. They didn't want to give advice. They closed down the telephones to the agencies, where people would call saying: Well, what is my right under the Affordable Care Act?

They did everything they could think of to eliminate ObamaCare and make it more difficult for people to sign up for it, but still people signed up. Many people realized it was their only chance—their only chance—to get health insurance.

The Trump administration and Republicans in Congress are determined to this day to get rid of it, and they have a new approach. If they can't kill it outright in the Senate and they can't kill it by President Trump's tweets, they are going to kill it in court.

Here is what they decided to do. Twenty attorneys general, starting with Texas—and I see my friend from Texas on the floor; the leading attorney general is from Texas—filed a lawsuit. Here is what they said. It is unconstitutional to say that you cannot discriminate against people because they have preexisting conditions.

Now, those are three negative words. So let me try to translate this Helsinki style into something you might understand.

What they basically said is this: We don't believe the Constitution can stop an insurance company from discriminating against people with a medical history, and we are going to court to prove it. And they have, with the support of the Trump administration.

They are trying to find a way to eliminate the protection of people with preexisting conditions so that they can buy affordable quality health insurance.

What an amazing mission that is—that these attorneys general and this administration want to find a way to deny health insurance coverage to millions of Americans or make it so expensive that they could never afford it.

What are they thinking? Don't they represent the same flesh-and-blood Americans as everyone else? Don't they represent families, as I do, and all of us do, who have someone in their family with a medical history? I guess a third of American families qualify for that. Yet they want to say that those people should be discriminated against. Why? Because of the misfortune they had of being born with a congenital birth defect or the problem they had because they conquered cancer but always worry about its coming back.

These are the things that my Republican friends say: Well, that is the way it goes. Good luck in the insurance market. We are not going to protect you.

They say what it is all about is choice. It is pretty easy to have good choices in life when you are healthy or wealthy. But if you don't fit in those two categories, your choices are extremely limited. People find themselves with only bad choices if they are not healthy or wealthy and they don't have the protection of the law. They find health insurance premiums they cannot afford. When they find a premium they can afford and start to look at the health insurance policy, it turns out that it doesn't cover much.

They also find themselves in positions where, as I mentioned earlier, someone in the family has a medical history. The wife has a medical history and you can't buy a family plan that you can afford for the rest of the family. That is the reality of the world the Republicans envision us moving to. Oh, it may be some great economic market model, but it doesn't work in reality—not in the reality of people who are born with illnesses they have no control over and who spend their lives fighting them and need a helping hand.

The Affordable Care Act gave them that helping hand. The Trump administration and Republicans in Congress have been determined from the beginning to put an end to this protection, to eliminate health insurance for more and more Americans, and to make it unaffordable for so many families. Is that why they ran for Congress? Is that why they ran for the Senate—to go home and say: Well, sorry folks, but because of my principles, you don't get health insurance. You can't afford the health insurance being offered to you, or you can buy a junk policy that just will not be there when you need it.

Is that what America is all about?

This is interesting to me, and I will close with this. The Chicago Medical Society represents the doctors in the greater Chicagoland area. I have come to know it. It is one of the best medical associations in our State. It is more progressive than most and more thoughtful than most. I really salute them time and again.

They did a poll of their members, and they asked them: Where do you think this is going?

Well, first they said: We believe that people have a right to quality, afford-

able healthcare—these are doctors—a right to quality, affordable healthcare. Second, they said there are programs that work, like Medicare, programs that people trust.

The premise behind Medicare is very basic. If you are of an eligible age, you get health insurance. We make sure of it. We guarantee to you that you are going to get quality care through a government-run insurance program. There are a lot of Republicans who would like to see Medicare and Medicaid go away, too, but America wouldn't. America believes in it. I believe in the principle behind both of those plans—that, as Americans, we should care for one another, give each and every family a chance, and make certain that, at the end of the day, healthcare is not just a privilege for those who happen to be wealthy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want to talk for a second about an amendment I have to the minibuss appropriations package.

I am going to talk very briefly about the amendment, but, first, I want to respond to some of the comments of my friend the Senator from Illinois, for whom I have great respect. I just disagree with him on this subject of the Affordable Care Act, and I want to respond briefly.

Let me tell you what Republicans believe, at least most Republicans whom I know. Most Republicans I know believe what Americans believe, and that is that in our country, if you are hungry, we feed you. If you are homeless, we house you. If you are too poor to be sick, we will pay for your doctor. We in America, Republicans and Democrats, put our money where our mouth is. We spend \$1 trillion a year helping people who are less fortunate than we are, and that separates our country from every other country in the world.

Frankly, that is why so many of our neighbors across this great planet want to come to America. It is because we care about other people. I mean, when is the last time you heard of anybody trying to sneak into China or Russia? That is why they want to come to America.

But when a government program, though well intended, isn't working, we owe it to the American taxpayer to explain to them why, and the Affordable Care Act has not worked. I wish it had.

I had the highest hopes. I remember when the Senate debated it. Call me a nerd, but I watched it on C-SPAN. I wanted it to work. We were promised: Look, as a result of this act, we are going to make health insurance accessible, and we are going to make it affordable.

I said: Man, I will take a dozen of those. We have been trying to do that for 50 years around here. Maybe this time we will get it right.

It was offered with the best of intentions. You will never hear me criticize

President Obama for an act of patriotism. He was very well intended. He wanted it to work. It wasn't a question of bad motives. It was just a bad idea.

You know, 150 years ago, doctors used to bleed their patients with the best of intentions, but they stopped doing it because it was a bad idea.

Now, we can do better. I agree with the objectives from the Senator of Illinois. Let me say it again that I have great respect for him, but the American people deserve a health insurance program that looks like somebody designed it on purpose, and that is not the Affordable Care Act. I wish it were, but it is not. We can do better.

AMENDMENT NO. 3430

Mr. President, let me hit a lick about my amendment to the minibus appropriation package, H.R. 6147.

Here is the problem. We have a lot of foreign seafood imported into the United States, and some of it is very dangerous. I am afraid to say that a lot of it is very dangerous. I am unhappy to say that.

Our FDA is in charge of making sure that this foreign seafood is safe. It spends \$11.9 million a year to do that. My amendment would give the FDA an additional \$3.1 million, and here is why it is important.

Last year, the United States imported \$21.5 billion worth of seafood—not million, but \$21.5 billion. Now, the FDA is supposed to inspect it to make sure that it is safe before you eat it. The FDA does the best it can, but they are only able, with the small amount of money, relatively speaking, that it has, to test a very small sample, 2 percent.

Ninety-eight percent of the foreign seafood coming in is not even tested. When it is tested, the FDA often finds that it contains salmonella, it contains listeria, it contains dirt, and it contains illegal drugs, like antibiotics.

What does that mean?

Well, if you eat enough of the stuff, aside from the fact that you could grow an extra ear or glow in the dark, then, you develop a resistance to antibiotics. If you eat bad seafood, particularly shrimp full of these antibiotics, and you get sick, you get an infection, maybe an abscessed tooth. You go to the doctor, the doctor gives you antibiotics, and they don't work anymore.

Now, remember that we are only examining 2 percent of all seafood imports. If you run the numbers, you will see that barely 0.2 percent of seafood imports are rejected every year. The vast majority, 98 percent, were not even checked. This isn't just about public safety, although that is certainly important. It is also about public policy.

As for American shrimpers, let me tell you what they have to compete against in my State and in other States. They are being asked to compete with foreign fishermen who are unfairly subsidized by the Federal Government and who face little to no environmental regulations and little to no

quality control. They fish where they are not supposed to. They ignore international quotas. They pump much of their fish full of illegal drugs, and they don't look out for the health of local ecosystems, as our domestic fisher men and women do.

The result is dangerous. It is unsafe for the American people, and it is unfair to the American shrimpers who do it the right way.

I don't want my family eating it. I don't want my son eating it. I don't want my wife eating it. I don't want my dogs eating it. If the American people are listening, be careful if you eat it.

That is what my amendment does.

With that, I yield the floor.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3407

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 3407.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. 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. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 166 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Gillibrand	Paul
Baldwin	Graham	Perdue
Barrasso	Grassley	Peters
Bennet	Harris	Portman
Blumenthal	Hassan	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Brown	Heitkamp	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Cantwell	Hirono	Sanders
Capito	Hoeven	Sasse
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Carper	Inhofe	Schumer
Casey	Isakson	Scott
Cassidy	Johnson	Shaheen
Collins	Jones	Shelby
Coons	Kaine	Smith
Corker	Kennedy	Stabenow
Cornyn	King	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Tester
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Leahy	Tillis
Cruz	Manchin	Toomey
Daines	Markey	Udall
Donnelly	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McConnell	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Enzi	Merkley	Whitehouse
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden
Fischer	Murphy	Young
Flake	Murray	
Gardner	Nelson	

NAYS—1

Lee

NOT VOTING—2

Blunt McCain

The amendment (No. 3407) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3430

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to Kennedy amendment No. 3430.

Mr. CORKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient question?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 167 Leg.]

YEAS—87

Alexander	Fischer	Murphy
Baldwin	Gardner	Murray
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Nelson
Bennet	Graham	Perdue
Blumenthal	Grassley	Peters
Booker	Harris	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Reed
Brown	Heinrich	Roberts
Burr	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cantwell	Heller	Rubio
Capito	Hirono	Sanders
Cardin	Hoeven	Schatz
Carper	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Casey	Inhofe	Scott
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Jones	Smith
Coons	Kaine	Stabenow
Corker	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	King	Tester
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Thune
Cotton	Leahy	Tillis
Cruz	Manchin	Udall
Daines	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murkowski	Young

NAYS—11

Crapo	Lankford	Sasse
Flake	Lee	Shaheen
Hassan	Paul	Toomey
Isakson	Risch	

NOT VOTING—2

Blunt McCain

The amendment (No. 3430) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 583

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, last week, the Senator from Delaware, Mr. COONS, and I submitted a resolution commending the Department of Justice for its investigation into the interference by the Russian Federation in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election and maintaining that the Russian Federation should be held accountable for its actions.

This simple resolution simply expresses support for our intelligence community, showing them we are behind them, we agree with them, we have trust in them, and we reject the words of a dictator, Vladimir Putin, who denies that they interfered at all. The resolution denies the words of a

dictator, Vladimir Putin, who maintains there was no Russian interference in the election.

Russian interference in the election is not a debatable fact. This occurred. We have evidence. Anybody who has seen simply what is public recognizes that this happened. Any of us in this body who have sat through classified briefings on this surely knows that it happened. Forensic evidence digitally and otherwise is simply not debatable.

The reason for this resolution is that in Helsinki, it appeared our President seemed to take the word of a dictator over the word of our intelligence community. He later walked that back but then still later—the next day—again talked about election interference as a “hoax.”

This resolution is nothing more than simply to say it happened, we know it happened, and we stand with our intelligence community, which has said over and over again consistently that there was election interference.

Last week, I cited George Orwell’s “1984,” where he said: “The party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears.”

Today our President said, what you are seeing and what you are reading is not what is happening.

We need to let the agencies of government know we in the Senate stand behind them, that we understand there was election interference, and by doing this—by knowing this—we can prepare ourselves better for election interference that we know is coming because it is still in the works.

As the Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats said, “The red light is blinking.” This interference occurred, and it continues. So by knowing the truth, then we can better prepare for what is to come.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 583. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, what we have here is another distraction from what we in this body need to be focused on today; that is, funding the Federal Government and confirming this President’s nominees.

Right now, we have just 23 working days, as a result of the way the Senate operates, between now and the end of the fiscal year—just 23 days. Meanwhile, we have 329 nominees. These are Presidential nominees waiting for this body to confirm them. We need to stay on track.

This resolution is no more than political theater. This resolution was previously objected to by Senator CORNYN just last week. It will continue to be

objected to again because it is unnecessary.

The Senate, the House of Representatives, and our intelligence community have all thoroughly investigated this matter. In fact, the Senate Intelligence Committee has held 16 open hearings, dating back to January of 2017. They all found that Russia did, in fact, attempt to interfere in the U.S. election. We all take that very seriously.

However, let’s be crystal clear. They also found there is no evidence this interference impacted the outcome of the Presidential election in 2016 at all.

This President and this body have consistently been tough on Russia. I have personally cosponsored strong sanctions on Russia and introduced legislation condemning Russian military aggression around the world. We are currently debating additional economic sanctions to hold Russia further accountable, and we will continue to do so as long as their nefarious activities continue.

What we don’t need are more political distractions, and that is all this is. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I just want to offer my response to the very disappointing renewed objection to the resolution that Senator FLAKE and I have attempted to move through this body now twice.

Last week, Senator FLAKE and I came to call on our Senate colleagues to speak clearly in support of our intelligence community, our Federal law enforcement community, and to state unequivocally that Russia’s attacks on our democracy will not be tolerated and that we will take action in a firm and bipartisan and swift way.

Some have said this is merely a simple or symbolic message. I say there are powerful symbols that motivate our Nation, like our flag, and that, although symbolic, are substantive in their consequences.

After the narrow objection of one Senator to this resolution last week, we hear another objection tonight saying what we should be focused on is confirming nominees and funding the Federal Government. I, frankly, don’t get the point. If this symbolic resolution, which calls on this Senate to act on hearings, on receiving notes, and on imposing sanctions, in order to push back against Russia’s attack on our democracy—if we cannot find 2 minutes to adopt by unanimous consent this simple resolution, then I worry that we continue to have a problem. We continue to have a problem of lack of clarity about what actually happened in 2016 and what may happen in 2018.

I will remind my colleagues, briefly, that President Trump’s own Director of National Intelligence has warned that Russia’s attacks on our digital infrastructure are “persistent, pervasive, and they are meant to undermine America’s democracy.”

I know I don’t need to remind my colleagues that what defines us as a democracy is free, fair, and open elections that our people find credible.

Just this morning, the Department of Homeland Security publicly released that air-gapped control centers for utilities in more than 100 places across our country had been penetrated successfully by Russian military intelligence.

The threat to our 2018 election continues to build, the clarity that we have been attacked in our 2016 election continues to build, and the sanctions that our President could be fully exercising were passed by this body by a vote of 98 to 2 last summer through the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.

This resolution is simple. Because of a lack of clarity at the Helsinki summit between President Trump and President Putin, it calls for prompt hearings, the release of relevant information and notes to better understand the impact of what was committed to in that meeting in Helsinki, and the full implementation of the sanctions adopted by this body by a vote of 98 to 2.

Either we mean it or we don’t. Either we care about knowing what happened in Helsinki or we don’t. Either we get the threat to our upcoming election or we don’t. In my view, we continue to face threats to our elections and to our critical infrastructure, and it is long past time for Congress to work together to secure our democracy.

I will close by thanking my colleague and friend from Arizona for being a partner in this effort, for seeing clearly what is happening, and for standing up and asking this body to act. He gave, I think, a haunting opening quote from “1984.”

I am concerned that if our President thinks it is appropriate to invite President Putin of Russia to meet with him in our White House or in our Nation’s Capital, that he may not yet fully get the point. I am encouraged that Speaker RYAN and Majority Leader MCCONNELL said clearly earlier today that President Putin is not welcome in this Nation’s Capitol, in this building, in the Capitol where this Congress meets. I wonder what more it will take for there to be clarity on the part of the administration that President Putin is our adversary, has attacked our election, is a threat to our democracy, and should not be welcome in this Nation’s Capital as a whole.

I call on my colleagues to support this resolution, to stand with our intelligence and law enforcement communities and against this dangerous foreign adversary, Russia.

Again, I thank and compliment my colleague from Arizona for joining me in this important effort.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Delaware for his very

forceful articulation of the reason for this resolution.

Again, I repeat what was said by the President today: “Just remember what you’re seeing and what you’re reading is not what’s happening.”

Continually, the topic of election interference is being muddled and being further clarified and then further muddled. That is why it is important for this body to stand up and say: We know what happened, and we don’t want it to happen again. That is what this resolution is all about.

The Senator who objected noted that we have a lot to do in Congress and we can’t waste our time with resolutions like this. If this simply passes, it is done. We have stated what we came here to state. But as it stands now, since it has been objected to, we will bring it back. So if we are really concerned about the agenda for the rest of the year, let’s simply agree to it and let the intelligence community know that we stand with them. That is what we are doing here. Why object to it?

There is not one sentence in here, not one word that says anything about whether the election interference by the Russians was dispositive, if it had any impact on the election. That is not implied in any way by this resolution. It simply states what is obvious, what the Senator who objected acknowledged, which has been repeated again and again by this body, by the House Intelligence Committee, and by every intelligence agency that we have. Because there was such a muddled statement in Helsinki, why not state once again here that we in the Senate know what happened and that we stand with those in the intelligence community who have brought this forward?

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here for the now 214th time to urge that we wake up to the effects of carbon pollution on the Earth’s oceans, atmosphere, and climate.

One obstacle to action on the threat that we face from climate change, however, is the manufactured doubt that so often surrounds this issue. We find this manufactured doubt a fossil fuel industry product—just as oil and gas are fossil fuel industry products—flowing even from the editorial page of one of our Nation’s leading publications, the Wall Street Journal. Whenever the issue is harmful industrial pollutants, the Wall Street Journal’s editorial page has a long record of misleading its readers, denying the legitimate science, and even ignoring its own news reporting, all to shill for the polluting industries.

A pattern of science denial repeats itself in the editorial pages of the Wall

Street Journal on environmental issues—issues such as acid rain and depletion of the ozone layer and now, and for years, climate change. This editorial page has persistently published editorials against taking action to prevent manmade climate change.

In June 1993, the editors wrote that there is “growing evidence that global warming just isn’t happening.”

In September 1999, the editorial page reported that “serious scientists” call global warming “one of the greatest hoaxes of all time.” If that is what they are saying, I suspect that what those scientists are serious about is the money they get from the fossil fuel industry.

In June 2005, the page asserted that the link between fossil fuels and global warming had “become even more doubtful.” This was June 2005, and the Wall Street Journal editorial page was questioning whether there is a link between fossil fuels and global warming?

Even more recently, a December 2011 editorial said that the global warming debate requires what the page called “more definitive evidence.” I guess having essentially all the serious scientists in the world lined up on this is not serious enough.

In October 2013, the editorial board of the Wall Street Journal warned that in addressing climate change, “interventions make the world poorer than it would otherwise be.” I guess if the world of Exxon shareholders is your world, then it does make it poorer, but in any real world, that just ain’t so.

You would think that as the evidence mounted over the past several decades, the Wall Street Journal editorial page would have at some point woken up and begun to publish editorials based on real science and data. To put it mildly, that has not been the case. Instead, the editorial page has doubled down on climate denial.

Just last month, the Journal published a piece titled “The Sea is Rising, but Not Because of Climate Change.” This piece is riddled with readily fact-checked scientific errors, and it ignores all the legitimate science on climate change and sea level rise. Not surprisingly, the author of this article, Fred Singer, is a notorious and long-standing climate denier who has for years been affiliated with or funded by the Heritage Foundation, the Heartland Institute, the Cato Institute, and others. He has been funded by a rogues’ gallery of climate denial front groups that have themselves been funded by ExxonMobil and the Koch brothers’ network.

Dr. Michael Mann and Dr. Andrea Dutton—both actual legitimate climate scientists—wrote a response to the Wall Street Journal. Their article, titled simply “Water’s Rising Because It’s Getting Warmer,” directly addresses the factual problems with Singer’s piece.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

In response to Singer’s claim that ice sheets are getting bigger, the actual climate scientists wrote:

No, ice is not accumulating on Earth—it is melting. No, Antarctica isn’t too cold for melting—warming oceans are eroding the ice from beneath, destabilizing the ice sheet. And no, legitimate scientific conclusions are not reached in op-ed pieces, but through careful peer-reviewed research.

Climate denial, by the way, tends to avoid peer review like the plague. It goes straight to FOX News, straight to hearings, and straight to the talk shows, because there it gets the audience it wants without having to face the rigor it would not survive.

Singer also erroneously claims that sea levels are not rising due to warming temperatures. In response, Drs. Mann and Dutton explain:

That research shows that sea levels are rising and human-caused climate change is the cause. Don’t take our word for it; help yourself to the mountain of scientific literature showing as much. When water warms, it expands. When ice warms, it melts. To deny these facts is not just to deny climate change. It is to deny basic physics.

But in the spirit of climate denial, there is very little that these denialists won’t say.

The Trump administration’s own “Climate Science Special Report,” issued by the Trump administration, found that “it is virtually certain that sea level rise this century and beyond will pose a growing challenge to coastal communities, infrastructure, and ecosystems.” The “Climate Science Special Report” will serve as the scientific backbone for the Fourth National Climate Assessment, which is due later this year. The authors list is a who’s who of top university scientists—many from universities in the home States of Senators here in this body—and experts from NOAA, the EPA, NASA, our National Labs, and the National Science Foundation. By the way, those NASA people have a rover driving around on Mars. They may know a little something about science. The report is backed by the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, Commerce, Interior, and State—in all, 13 Federal Agencies and Departments. Or you can believe the editorial page of the Wall Street Journal and its phony baloney fossil fuel-funded scientists.

The Journal actually continued its climate denial spree in June, publishing another piece titled “Thirty Years On, How Well Do Global Warming Predictions Stand Up?” In this one, Patrick Michaels and Ryan Maue argue that Dr. James Hansen’s 1988 climate change warnings were overestimated.

Well, let’s start by pulling the curtain back on these two characters who wrote the piece. You will quickly see that they are, to put it politely, aligned with the fossil fuel industry. Patrick Michaels is a senior fellow at the Koch-funded and Koch-funded Cato Institute. Michaels at one point admitted that 40 percent of his funding came from the fossil fuel industry. His

coauthor also joined the Koch-funded Cato Institute last year.

Believe it or not, yes, the fossil fuel industry still pays for this nonsense even as fossil fuel CEOs claim to recognize: Climate science is real, and we support a carbon fee. That, of course, being the latest chapter in the fossil fuel industry's long and ongoing campaign of fraud—now pretending that they support a carbon fee, when all of their political apparatus is dedicated to opposing the very result they claim to seek.

Thirty years ago, Hansen's testimony outlined three scenarios. Remember, this was 1988. The first scenario was a business-as-usual projection with accelerating emissions, yielding 1.5 degrees Celsius warming by 2100. The second scenario showed drastic emissions cuts, yielding 0.4 degrees Celsius warming by 2100. Hansen proposed a middle scenario of continued but not accelerating emissions, resulting in 0.84 degrees Celsius warming by 2100. In his testimony, Dr. Hansen stated that the middle scenario was the most likely.

Michaels and Maue claim that the scenario with the least amount of warming turned out to be correct, and therefore Hansen was wrong, and therefore climate models can't predict climate change. Unfortunately for them, the facts are otherwise.

Hansen's analysis projected that global surface air temperatures would increase by approximately 0.84 degrees Celsius between 1988 and 2100 in his middle scenario, the one he said was most likely. Once you account for the effects of a slight cooling that resulted from the success of the Montreal Protocol in phasing out chlorofluorocarbons, Hansen's projected warming is 0.6 to 0.7 degrees Celsius by 2100.

That, in blue, is the adjusted Hansen projection. I don't think you can fault him for not predicting the Montreal Protocol that happened after his prediction. It is fair to adjust his prediction for the Montreal Protocol and the effect of reduced chlorofluorocarbons. Once you do that, it shows that observed temperature in red tracks pretty darned well with his projections.

If that were my work, I would be pretty proud of it. Here it is 30 years later, and we are off by a gap that my finger can cover on the graph.

Michaels and Maue did not bother to mention that Hansen also predicted which parts of the globe would warm more quickly than others. Thirty years ago, he calculated the Arctic would warm faster, and there would be more warming over landmasses than over the oceans. All of these things are happening. Even Hansen's early climate models were accurate and reliable. And global warming is proceeding, just as the scientists have warned.

As the Wall Street Journal editorial page continues to publish its fossil fuel-funded nonsense—stuff that is written by pseudoscientists, funded by

the industry with a massive conflict of interest about this question—it has been 30 years since the warnings of Hansen. Despite all of the evidence that has piled up, consistent with his warnings, despite the regular litany of current events driven by climate change now, Congress has been taking no action. We have been stilled by the forces of the fossil fuel industry.

The real irony here is that the Wall Street Journal claims to be the news source for businesses and financial investors. Off the editorial page, out in the real world of business and finance, real decisions are being made by real executives, backed by real money.

Are they buying what the Wall Street Journal editorial page is selling? No. No, indeed. They are telling their clients and their companies: You must take climate change seriously, and you must take carbon pricing seriously.

In the real world, businesses are demanding better climate policies and investors are demanding better reporting of climate risk. The giant investment firm BlackRock led a group of major investors and broke the back of ExxonMobil's opposition to answering to its shareholders about climate change. They are demanding this. Many companies are even setting their own internal price on carbon to account for the real-world costs of climate change. The business community and the investment community are acting because they know climate change is real, is affecting their prognosis for their companies, and carbon pricing is a key part of the solution.

Increasingly, economists and financial regulators warn that we are actually hurtling toward an economic disruption—that we need to prepare for a possible crash of what they call the carbon bubble. This carbon bubble collapses when fossil fuel reserves, now claimed as assets by the fossil fuel companies, turn out to be useless as renewable energy sources grow more competitive, and those useless assets become what are called stranded assets. How much gets stranded?

A publication by economists in the journal *Nature* estimated the following impacts in a 2-degree Celsius world: “stranded assets . . . around 82 percent of global coal reserves, 49 percent of global gas reserves, and 33 percent of global oil reserves.”

Imagine that—82 percent of global coal reserves gone, wiped off the balance sheets; 49 percent of global gas reserves gone, wiped off the balance sheets; and 33 percent of global oil reserves gone, wiped off the balance sheets because they are no longer economically producible.

Is this nuts? Even the Bank of England in an official statement has warned that investments in fossil fuels and related technologies may “take a huge hit.”

At some point, there has to be a grownup in the room. The fossil fuel industry, obviously, is not capable of

being that grownup. They still pay for denial and obstruction. The Wall Street Journal's editorial page is obviously no use. That page is still yapping on the industry's leash.

There is some good news. This week, two House Republicans, at long last, introduced a bill that would put a price on carbon emissions. But we still await one Republican in the Senate, just one—anyone who will face up to this problem, who will stand up for science, who will acknowledge what their own home State's universities are teaching and take some real action. Climate denial is a dangerous and ultimately doomed game, and the Wall Street Journal editorial page should know better.

It is time to wake up.

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

WATER'S RISING BECAUSE IT'S GETTING
WARMER

MAY 22, 2018.—Would the Journal run the op-ed “Objects Are Falling, but Not Because of Gravity”? That's pretty similar to climate contrarian Fred Singer saying *The Sea Is Rising, but Not Because of Climate Change*” (op-ed, May 16).

No, ice is not accumulating on Earth—it is melting. No, Antarctica isn't too cold for melting—warming oceans are eroding the ice from beneath, destabilizing the ice sheet. And no, legitimate scientific conclusions are not reached in op-ed pieces, but through careful peer-reviewed research.

That research shows that sea levels are rising and human-caused climate change is the cause. Don't take our word for it; help yourself to the mountain of scientific literature showing as much. When water warms, it expands. When ice warms, it melts. To deny these facts is not just to deny climate change. It is to deny basic physics.

New York City experienced an additional 25 square miles of flooding from the approximately one foot of sea-level rise that has occurred due to human-caused warming. Without concerted efforts to reduce carbon emissions, it could experience as much as eight feet by the end of the century—permanently inundating most of Wall Street.

ASST. PROF. ANDREA L.
DUTTON,
*University of Florida,
Gainesville, Fla.*

PROF. MICHAEL E. MANN,
*Penn State University,
University Park, Pa.*

Fred Singer leaves out any real evidence to refute research attributing the measured sea-level rise almost exactly to the measured thermal expansion of seawater and glacier melt.

SEN. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE (D., R.I.),
Newport, R.I.

Our emissions will continue shaping how much seas rise in the coming decades. Taking this threat lightly endangers hundreds of communities in the U.S. and world-wide, and wastes the dwindling time we have to reduce our risk by cutting carbon emissions and investing in resilience. Since 1900, global sea level has risen by seven to eight inches. Sea-level rise has brought more frequent flooding to dozens of coastal communities, including Atlantic City, N.J. and Charleston, S.C., where the number of floods has quadrupled since 1970. The pace of sea-level rise has recently doubled.

Mr. Singer acknowledges there's "good data showing sea levels are in fact rising at an accelerating rate," yet makes the unscientific claim that this is disconnected from rising global-warming emissions and temperatures. The risks are clear. Sea-level rise projections for 2100 range from one foot to more than eight feet—far greater than the six inches Mr. Singer claims. Swiftly reducing our global-warming emissions would give us the best chance to minimize sea-level rise, but our current emissions trajectory makes achieving the range's low end more unlikely each day.

KRISTINA DAHL, PH.D.,
Union of Concerned Scientists, Oakland, CA.

NASA disagrees with Prof. Singer. A Feb. 13 paper notes: "Rising concentrations of greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere increase the temperature of air and water, which causes sea level to rise in two ways. First, warmer water expands, and this 'thermal expansion' of the ocean has contributed about half of the 2.8 inches (7 centimeters) of global mean sea-level rise we've seen over the last 25 years . . . Second, melting land ice flows into the ocean, also increasing sea level across the globe."

WENDY FLEISCHER,
Brooklyn, NY.

Melting ice is not the only thing that can raise the sea level. Note the eruption of hundreds of undersea volcanoes in the oceans and what they deposit. All of the rivers of the world flush millions of acre feet of mud and silt into the sea floor daily. During an undersea earthquake a tectonic plate could override another, affecting a thousand miles of sea floor, displacing a great deal of water and raising the sea level.

DAVID DARLOW,
Spokane, WA.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. 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. ROUNDS. 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 SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 467 and 858.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The bill clerk read the nominations of Bruce Landsberg, of South Carolina, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2022; and Jennifer L. Homendy, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2019.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. ROUNDS. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomi-

nations 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; that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD, and the Senate resume legislative session.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Landsberg and Homendy nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

MONTANA KOREAN WAR VETERANS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of the Montanans who served our Nation during the Korean war.

Their service and sacrifice will forever be remembered in the official CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Many of them rest in peace in the sacred ground of the Yellowstone National Cemetery.

During the Korean war, 6.8 million Americans served between 1950 and 1953. About 20,000 Montanans served in the military during that time, and 5,000 of them saw combat. We lost 350 Montanans in Korea.

Today about 6,000 Korean war veterans call Montana home. Survivors of the "Forgotten War," far too many of them have struggled for far too long to receive the recognition and benefits they truly deserve.

As ranking member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, it has been my honor to fight for legislation that rights this wrong. I have introduced legislation that extends benefits related to toxic exposure to more veterans who served along the Korean Demilitarized Zone. Because when servicemembers deploy to harm's way and are exposed to toxic chemicals, our country has a responsibility to meet their healthcare needs.

Honoring these veterans takes more than just legislation; it takes dedicated people who are committed to telling their stories and honoring those who have served.

The Montana American Legion, led by Commander Richard Klose, is an important partner working to ensure vet-

erans who fought in every conflict can get the healthcare, honor, and recognition they have earned.

Since 2014, Montana veterans and their loved ones can choose to be buried under the Big Sky in the Yellowstone National Cemetery—veterans like COL John R. Black of the U.S. Army, the most highly decorated veteran interred at the Yellowstone National Cemetery, earned two Silver Star medals and two Legion of Merit medals in his service to our Nation in the Korean and Vietnam wars; veterans like Captain Ralph D. Myer, a U.S. Public Health Service Officer of the Korean and Vietnam wars, is one of the highest ranking veterans interred at the Yellowstone National Cemetery.

Montana will remember Colonel Black, Captain Myer, and all of our citizens who fought during the Korean war.

We will honor their memory by relentlessly fighting to get the veterans of the Korean war the equal benefits and care that they earned but are too often denied.

Some paid the ultimate sacrifice. Some returned home bearing the seen and unseen wounds of war. All showed courage and strength when they heeded the call to protect our Nation far from home. We cannot forget their service and sacrifice.

To Commander Klose, the Montana American Legion, my friends at the Yellowstone National Cemetery, and all those who dedicate their lives to this country in service, on behalf of myself, Montana, and our Nation, I extend my greatest thanks for your enduring bravery, service, and self-sacrifice.

REMEMBERING GEORGE B. WILLIE, SR.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I rise to honor George B. Willie, Sr., one of our last surviving Navajo code talkers, who passed away at age 92 on December 5, 2017. Mr. Willie was a humble man who never bragged and rarely talked about his uncommon feat.

Mr. Willie was born near Sawmill, AZ. He was Tó Dích'iinii—Bitter Water—and born for Tábaahá—Near The Water Edge—and resided near Leupp when he passed away.

Mr. Willie only had a seventh-grade education. He tried to enlist in 1941, but was too young. He was finally able to join the Marines 2 years later, when he was 17 years old. He served the Second Marine Division, 10th Battalion, from 1943 until 1946.

As a marine, Mr. Willie was one of the 421 code talkers from the Navajo Nation. The original 29 Navajo code talkers developed a code based on their native language. At that time, there was no written language, and only about 30 persons outside of Tribal members understood Navajo. The code talkers were required to quickly and accurately translate and transmit messages about troop movements, tactics,

and the like through telephone and radio. At first skeptical, military leaders quickly learned to appreciate their skill and tremendous value to the war effort. The Japanese never broke their code.

While the Federal Government relied on the Navajo language for military success, back home, it continued the longstanding policy of forbidding Native students from speaking their languages at Federal boarding schools.

Mr. Willie served in the Battle of Okinawa, one of the last and deadliest battles of the war. In June 1945, the Americans and the British Pacific Fleet took the island after 82 days of battle. It was their last stop before the planned attempt to take the Island of Japan, which was preempted when the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6.

After coming home, Mr. Willie married Emma Gean Willie, and they had 10 children. The code talker program was secret, and the code talkers were sworn not to tell anyone about their work. Even after the Federal Government declassified the program in 1968, Mr. Willie continued to honor his promise and did not tell family members he was a code talker until almost 30 years later. In 2001, Mr. Willie and his fellow code talkers were awarded the Silver Congressional Medal of Honor.

Today I honor Mr. Willie, a true American hero.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JOHN G. DEERY, SR.

• Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to pay tribute to an outstanding businessman and citizen John G. Deery, Sr., of Cedar Falls, IA. Mr. Deery passed away recently at the age of 88. He leaves behind a close-knit and loving family—his beloved wife, Marlene; his two sons, John and Dan, both of Cedar Falls, IA; and a host of children and great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

A veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, John was an active parishioner of St. Patrick Catholic Church and a respected civic and business leader who left his mark throughout Cedar Valley. Following his military service—1948–1951—and startup ventures in the Quad Cities and Wisconsin, John purchased a Buick dealership in the late 1960s in Cedar Falls. This Wisconsin native became an Iowa transplant and never looked back. From then on, he and his family business paved a road to prosperity by winning the business of generations of satisfied customers.

A look back through the rearview mirror shows a life well lived. He was a member of the Cedar Falls AMVETS Post 49, Iowa Auto Dealers Association, Knights of Columbus, and a founding father of Community National Bank.

The patriarch of the family, John carved out his slice of the American dream. After opening the Buick dealership, the business eventually grew into a series of enterprises, eventually employing a workforce of more than 200 people. For six decades, he owned the Deery Automotive Group, encompassing John Deery Motors, Dan Deery Motors, and Deery Brothers Collision Center that provided livelihoods for generations of local families and a trusted place to buy and repair the family car.

After turning the reins of the automobile business over to the next generation, John launched yet another successful enterprise in real estate development. An active octogenarian, John didn't let any grass grow underneath his feet and continued looking for ways to make his community a better place to live. A decade ago, he was nominated for the Waterloo Courier's inaugural Eight Over Eighty Award.

The residents of Cedar Valley have benefited from John and Marlene's generous commitment to giving back their time, talent, and treasure. A number of nonprofit agencies and community organizations have benefited from their philanthropic pursuits, including my alma mater, the University of Northern Iowa, the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office, the Cedar Falls and Waterloo police departments, St. Patrick Catholic Church and School, and El Kahir Shrine.

Today I pay my respects to this American veteran, successful Iowan, and civic leader. John Deery, Sr., steered a steady and honorable journey on the road of life and he will be greatly missed by those who loved him the most.●

TRIBUTE TO DIANNE PAQUETTE

• Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize as July's Granite Stater of the Month an individual who truly embodies the best of New Hampshire's all-hands-on-deck spirit, consistently rolling up her sleeves and helping her community, Dianne Paquette of Salem, NH.

Dianne's efforts started with two elementary school playgrounds that needed repairs. She led efforts to raise money to repair the playgrounds because, in her words, "somebody has to." After she was successful in her fundraising efforts for the playgrounds, Dianne moved on to other town landmarks and was instrumental in raising funds and gathering volunteers for several projects, including restoring the historic Salem Depot Train Station.

Dianne has formed a core group of friends—a group that she calls the Village—made up of law enforcement officials, firefighters, and Granite Staters who share her commitment to helping their community. Recently, Dianne and the Village have focused on helping those in need after two separate apartment fires in Salem. She helped organize a spaghetti dinner that raised

nearly \$6,000 and then, following a second fire, and with the help of firefighters working in the kitchen, a pancake breakfast that raised over \$5,000.

Dianne said that these fires increased awareness about an issue that is near to her heart, the lack of affordable housing in the Salem area. The funds she helped raise are going to address many of the challenges the victims of the fires will face, including relocating. As she said, you can't fix everything with pancakes and spaghetti, but you can do what you can to help.

Dianne reminds us all that sometimes helping your community is about being the person to take the first step and voice the idea, and her efforts to mobilize friends and neighbors to work together has made a difference throughout her community. For her dedication to Salem, I am proud to recognize Dianne as July's Granite Stater of the Month.●

REMEMBERING JACK POWELL

• Mr. JONES. Mr. President, I rise today with deep sadness, but also with reverence to remember Jack Powell, who died on May 12, 2018. Jack Powell was a beloved coach and educator in Alabama. He was revered by his students and players and often regarded as a second father to many. Until his 95th birthday, regular reunions were held by former high school players to honor Coach Powell and reminisce with former teammates. His accomplishments on and off the course touched thousands of lives.

Coach Powell was born on March 20, 1922, in Andalusia. He was one of 10 children born to George Bennie and Lilla Lawson Powell. He played basketball in the State tournament for 3 years as a student at Pleasant Home High School. They went undefeated during the regular season of his senior year. Coach Powell went on to Auburn University to play for coaches Bob Evans, Ralph "Shug" Jordan, and V.J. Edney. While at Auburn, he was a letterman 2 years in a row and cocaptain of the team in 1946.

After his college career, he served as an educator for approximately 40 years. He worked at Lockhart and Eufaula high schools from 1947 to 1966, then Livingston University, now the University of West Alabama, from 1966 to 1972, and finally at Sparks State Technical College in Eufaula until his retirement.

During his time as a high school coach, he received several Coach of the Year Awards and won district, area, regional, and State championships. He coached three Alabama All-Star Games, including the inaugural game in 1963. He served as coach to 11 All-State players. While at Eufaula High School, his team went to the State tournament nine times, finishing in the top four positions. During his 20-year tenure, he amassed an impressive winning record of 406–193.

When he entered the college coaching scene in 1966, he led Livingston University to its first Alabama Collegiate Conference championship and two consecutive ACC Tournament Championships. In 1969, he was named ACC Coach of the Year and in 1971 was again named ACC Coach of the Year, in addition to Alabama Small Colleges Coach of the Year and NAIA District 27 Coach of the Year.

In 1992, after decades of hard work and commitment to teams, he became one of the first inductees in the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame. One of his greatest honors was having a gymnasium named after him in Eufaula, where it served as the home to Eufaula's youth basketball leagues for many years. He also established a Tri-State basketball tryout clinic where players came from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee. As a result, more than 60 young athletes earned scholarships to play in college.

Aside from teaching and coaching, Coach Powell was an avid outdoorsman who loved to fish, hunt, and garden. He also served in his churches in both Eufaula and Livingston. He was a Sunday school teacher for more than 50 years in addition to serving as a deacon and chairman of the board for more than 12 years.

My wife, Louise, and I extend our sincerest condolences to Coach Powell's two sons, five grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and the entire extended community of athletes and fans on whom he made a positive impact. His legacy lives on in each of us.●

REMEMBERING MORT PLUMB

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport is buzzing with activity all year long. It connects our military posted in Alaska with their families in the Lower 48, welcomes business visitors from around the world, and takes Alaskans to the Lower 48 for a weekend of cheering the Seahawks in Seattle, a shopping trip, or simply a break from the Alaskan winter.

The Anchorage airport is the truly a crossroads for our friends in rural Alaska coming and going from meetings and medical appointments in Anchorage. Its gates are places where Alaskans congregate—catching up with old friends or connecting with State legislators and an occasional U.S. Senator.

Look to the left as your plane pulls into the gate, and you see cargo planes from around the world. The Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport is our State's premier transportation hub, a cargo hub of global renown.

For most of my adult life, the Anchorage airport was a pretty utilitarian place. The walls were tan, the gate and baggage claim signs had white lettering on a blue background. If you were picking up a rental car, you rolled your bag through the snow because most were parked outside. The return lot was outside too. But it worked. It

was a place to come and go, not a place to linger.

Mort Plumb had another vision. He foresaw the boom in tourism that would come to Alaska and believed that our State needed a gateway airport as beautiful and inspiring as the State itself. Mort was the father of today's Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. A showplace for Native arts and crafts with huge picture windows and vistas of the Chugach mountain range that cause our visitors to wonder whether they really want to leave this unique place, a portal to the Great Land.

Mort's vision has paid off; 2018 could be a record year for tourism in Alaska, and seat capacity on out-of-state flights this year is up 5.6 percent. That translates into the opportunity for an additional 43,000 visitors to enjoy what Alaska has to offer.

Sadly, in February, Mort passed away at the age of 74. Born in Pennsylvania, he came to Alaska like many of our finest do: in the service of our country. He served 27 years in the Air Force, and we are indeed grateful that the Air Force chose to send Mort and his family to Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage. As a colonel, Mort served as director of operations for the Alaskan Command, chief of staff for the 11th Air Force, and vice commander for the 11th Air Force. He retired from the Air Force in 1994.

Mort's retirement didn't last long, as he was quickly recruited by Governor Tony Knowles to direct the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. He took that job in 1995 and remained until 2008. All told, he served under three Governors: Democrat Knowles and Republicans Frank Murkowski and Sarah Palin. Mort Plumb served with great distinction.

After retiring from the airport, Mort was hardly done with his career. He took on new responsibilities as chief operating officer of the First National Bank of Alaska and continued to serve on a host of nonprofit boards. One of his favorites was the Fisher House of Alaska, which cares for military family caregivers and veterans in town for medical appointments. Mort was active in the civilian and military community and was also an avid runner, golfer, and skier. He was a devoted husband, attending most every community event with his wife, Ann, by his side. He was also a loving father and doting grandfather.

To his family and friends, know that the legacy and service of Mort Plumb will long be remembered. We appreciate our friend Mort, and we miss him.●

REMEMBERING GEORGE ELL

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of George Ell, a member of the Blackfoot Nation who is being remembered by his family, by his community, and by his Tribe.

George was born and grew up on Livermore Creek near Browning, MT,

fishing and exploring the mountains surrounding it. In the year 1890, not long after Montana was admitted to the Union, the U.S. Government forcibly took him from his home at the age of 16.

George was forced to board a train to Pennsylvania to attend Carlisle Indian Industrial School. He was turned away from his cultural practices, forced to cut his hair, and discard his traditional clothing. He was barred from speaking his language.

George died under mysterious circumstances a little more than a year after he arrived in Pennsylvania—a foreign land for a 16-year-old boy. The government buried him in Carlisle. It took 128 years for George to rightfully return home to Montana, where he belongs, to be reburied.

George's ancestors laid him to rest recently on a bluff next to Flattop Mountain, where his family can mourn and our Nation can learn from this sad chapter of America's history.

I also want to recognize George's family, including Dale Ell, Leon Chief Elk, Rhonda Boggs, and everyone involved, who were relentless in their quest to bring George back home. Their efforts are not only admirable, but an essential part of the collective healing process.

The Ell family is just one of many Native American families who were torn apart by this Nation's horrendous assimilation policies and the boarding school era. It is my hope that, as his family lays George Ell to rest, we commit ourselves to a brighter future—a future where we celebrate the first people of this Nation, their culture, heritage, religion, and strength. It is imperative that we learn from the story of Mr. Ell, so the next generation is educated about the suffering, so our kids and grandkids are inspired by his fortitude and the resilience of so many other Native Americans.

I rise today to honor those who were tested by cruelty; may their stories resonate in our history and spur us toward a stronger tomorrow.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 2245. An act to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 and E-2 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2850. An act to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 959. An act to amend title VIII of the Public Health Service Act to extend advanced education nursing grants to support clinical nurse specialist programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1220. An act to establish the Adams Memorial Commission to carry out the provisions of Public Law 107-62, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1676. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

H.R. 1689. An act to protect private property rights.

H.R. 2345. An act to require the Federal Communications Commission to study the feasibility of designating a simple, easy-to-remember dialing code to be used for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system.

H.R. 2630. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land to La Paz County, Arizona, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3045. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to extend the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3728. An act to amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain programs relating to the health professions workforce, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3994. An act to establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4100. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to revise the Federal charter for the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association.

H.R. 4881. An act to require the Federal Communications Commission to establish a task force for reviewing the connectivity and technology needs of precision agriculture in the United States.

H.R. 5385. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the program of payments to children's hospitals that operate graduate medical education programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5613. An act to designate the Quindaro Townsite in Kansas City, Kansas, as a National Commemorative Site.

H.R. 5709. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for enhanced penalties for pirate radio, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5875. An act to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the Dingell-Johnson Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, to provide parity for United States territories and the District of Colum-

bia, to make technical corrections to such Acts and related laws, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5954. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to clarify the meaning of the terms "act of war" and "blocked asset", and for other purposes.

H.R. 5979. An act to establish the Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument in the State of Kentucky as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6077. An act recognizing the National Comedy Center in Jamestown, New York.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 959. An act to amend title VIII of the Public Health Service Act to extend advanced education nursing grants to support clinical nurse specialist programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 1220. An act to establish the Adams Memorial Commission to carry out the provisions of Public Law 107-62, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1676. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 1689. An act to protect private property rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 2630. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land to La Paz County, Arizona, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3045. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to extend the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3728. An act to amend title VII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain programs relating to the health professions workforce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 3994. An act to establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 4100. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to revise the Federal charter for the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 4881. An act to require the Federal Communications Commission to establish a task force for reviewing the connectivity and technology needs of precision agriculture in the United States; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 5613. An act to designate the Quindaro Townsite in Kansas City, Kansas, as a National Commemorative Site, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 5709. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for enhanced penalties for pirate radio, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 5875. An act to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the

Dingell-Johnson Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, to provide parity for United States territories and the District of Columbia, to make technical corrections to such Acts and related laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 5979. An act to establish the Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument in the State of Kentucky as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 6077. An act recognizing the National Comedy Center in Jamestown, New York; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 5954. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to clarify the meaning of the terms "act of war" and "blocked asset", and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-6014. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Flonicamid; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9977-82-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2018; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6015. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Robert S. Walsh, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-6016. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that was declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-6017. A communication from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rule 701 - Exempt Offerings Pursuant to Compensatory Arrangements" (RIN3235-AM39) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 20, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-6018. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants From the Portland Cement Manufacturing Industry Residual Risk and Technology Review" (FRL No. 9981-06-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6019. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of California Plan Revisions; Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District; Stationary Source Permits" (FRL No. 9981-01-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6020. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About Licenses Authorizing Distribution to General Licensees" (NUREG-1556, Volume 16, Revision 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 20, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6021. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About Well Logging, Tracer, and Field Flood Study Licenses" (NUREG-1556, Volume 14, Revision 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 20, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6022. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Safety Evaluation of Technical Specifications Task Force Traveler TSTF-567, Revision 1, Add Containment Sump TS to Address GSI-191 Issues" (NUREG-1430, NUREG-1431, and NUREG-1432) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 20, 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6023. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad to Japan to support the manufacture of Drogue Rocket Motor and Propellant for end use in aircraft ejection seats for the Japanese Ministry of Defense (Transmittal No. DDTC 18-010); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6024. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report certifying for fiscal year 2018 that no United Nations agency or United Nations affiliated agency grants any official status, accreditation, or recognition to any organization which promotes and condones or seeks the legalization of pedophilia, or which includes as a subsidiary or member any such organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6025. A communication from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Student Assistance General Provisions, Federal Perkins Loan Program, Federal Family Education Loan Program, William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program, and Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant Program; Corrections" (RIN1840-AD28) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June

23, 2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-6026. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-411, "All-Terrain Vehicle Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6027. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-412, "Attorney General Limited Grant-Making Authority Temporary Amendment Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6028. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Bureau of Prisons' compliance with the privatization requirements of the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-6029. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Third Party Billing for Medical Care Provided under Special Treatment Authorities" (RIN2900-AP20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2018; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-6030. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fiduciary Activities" (RIN2900-AO53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 23, 2018; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-6031. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Connerville, Oklahoma)" (MB Docket No. 18-43) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 23, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6032. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Parts 1 and 22 of the Commission's Rules with Regard to the Cellular Service, Including Changes in Licensing of Unserved Area, et al." ((WT Docket No. 12-40, 10-112, and 16-138) (FCC 18-92)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 23, 2018; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. WICKER for Mr. McCain for the Committee on Armed Services.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Stephen R. Lyons, to be General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Mark D. Kelly, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Timothy J. Madden, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Jeffrey L. Harrigan, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Thomas A. Bussiere, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Kenneth S. Willsbach, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Stephen M. Twitty, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. Gary L. Thomas, to be General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Susan J. Pietrykowski, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Jon T. Thomas, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Gregory K. Anderson and ending with Col. Todd R. Wasmund, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 10, 2018.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. James F. Pasquarette, to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. WICKER for Mr. McCain. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nominations beginning with Jacqueline E. Berry and ending with Connie L. Winik, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 8, 2018.

Air Force nominations beginning with Anthony J. Aceto and ending with Regis C. Zozo, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 18, 2018.

Air Force nominations beginning with Michael A. Basso-Williams and ending with Irshad A. Shakir, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 25, 2018.

Air Force nomination of Vikhyat S. Bebart, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Mary F. Stuever and ending with Lavanya Viswanathan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 25, 2018.

Air Force nominations beginning with Kathleen E. Aalderink and ending with Isaiah S. Zyduck, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 28, 2018.

Air Force nomination of Nisha R. Baur, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Jay T. Flottmann, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Christopher P. Wherthey, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Issa M. Alvarez, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Nathaniel P. Lisenbee, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Sean P. Malanowski, to be Major.

Air Force nominations beginning with James W. Barnes and ending with Bradley A. Wisler, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 9, 2018.

Air Force nominations beginning with Adam D. Aasen and ending with George E. Quint, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 9, 2018.

Army nomination of Alexis N. Mendozadejesus, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Samuel B. Albahari and ending with Riccardo C. Paggett, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Johnmark R. Ardiente and ending with Nathan A. Gunter, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Ryan J. Berglin and ending with James A. Nardelli, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with David L. Burrier and ending with William T. Cigich, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nomination of Joshua V. Arndt, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Christopher Z. Farrington and ending with Michael P. Thomas, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nomination of Roderick W. Sumpter, to be Major.

Army nomination of Daniel Torres, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Michael P. Antecki, Jr. and ending with D014175, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Lisa M. Abel and ending with D014651, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Drew Q. Abell and ending with G010393, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Eli S. Adams and ending with D014147, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 20, 2018.

Army nomination of Rochell A. Maier, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Robert C. Soper, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Vincente G. Alcivar and ending with Edward W. Wright, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 25, 2018.

Army nomination of Benjamin E. Solomon, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with William J. Nels and ending with Kellie A. Whittlinger, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 28, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Vendeck M. Davis and ending with Ryan G. Lavoie, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 28, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Harry A. Hornbuckle and ending with Michael J. Kimball, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 28, 2018.

Army nominations beginning with Matthew W. Allen and ending with Francis E. Sanford, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 9, 2018.

Army nomination of Brian C. Morgan, to be Major.

Navy nomination of Travis A. Montplaisir, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Ariana P. Bensusan, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Bruce S. Kimbrell, Jr., to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Samantha C. Dugan, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Brian L. Lees, to be Lieutenant Commander.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Teri L. Donaldson, of Texas, to be Inspector General of the Department of Energy.

*Christopher Fall, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy.

*Karen S. Evans, of West Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response).

*Daniel Simmons, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy).

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(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 Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 3256. A bill to support businesses in Puerto Rico, extend child tax credits for families in Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 3257. A bill to impose sanctions on foreign persons responsible for serious violations of international law regarding the protection of civilians during armed conflict, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 3258. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to provide adjustment assistance to farmers adversely affected by reduced exports resulting from tariffs imposed as retaliation for United States tariff increases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 3259. A bill to increase the number of judgeships for the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and certain district courts of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 3260. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance benefits under the work opportunity credit, increase the work opportunity credit for vocational rehabilitation referrals, qualified SSI recipients, and qualified SSDI recipients, expand the disabled access credit, and enhance the deduction for expenditures to remove architectural and transportation barriers to the handicapped and elderly; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 3261. A bill to establish the Office of Disability Policy in the legislative branch; 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 Mr. MERKLEY:

S. Res. 588. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the need for transparency regarding meetings between President Donald J. Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. THUNE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BENNET, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Mr. HELLER):

S. Res. 589. A resolution designating July 28, 2018, as "National Day of the American Cowboy"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. UDALL):

S. Res. 590. A resolution recognizing the 171st anniversary of the arrival of pioneers belonging to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the Great Salt Lake Valley in Utah, and the contributions of the Church and its members to the United States and the world; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TESTER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. THUNE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. NELSON, Mr. DONNELLY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 591. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Purple Heart Recognition Day; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 339

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 339, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 515

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 515, a bill to require the Secretary of Labor to maintain a publicly available list of all employers that relocate a call center overseas, to make such companies ineligible for Federal grants or guaranteed loans, and to require disclosure of the physical location of business agents engaging in customer service communications, and for other purposes.

S. 545

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 545, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 720

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 720, a bill to amend the Export Administration Act of 1979 to include in the prohibitions on boycotts against allies of the United States boycotts fostered by international governmental organizations against Israel and to direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States to oppose boycotts against Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 794

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 794, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act in order to improve the process whereby Medicare administrative contractors issue local coverage determinations under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 811

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 811, a bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children.

S. 821

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 821, a bill to promote access for United States officials, journalists, and other citizens to Tibetan areas of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes.

S. 1023

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1023, a bill to reauthorize the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 through fiscal year 2021, and for other purposes.

S. 1087

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1087, a bill to ensure America's law enforcement officers have access to lifesaving equipment needed to defend themselves and civilians from attacks by terrorists and violent criminals.

S. 1299

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1299, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the occurrence of diabetes in Medicare beneficiaries by extending coverage under Medicare for medical nutrition therapy services to such beneficiaries with pre-diabetes or with risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes.

S. 1353

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S.

1353, a bill to require States to automatically register eligible voters to vote in elections for Federal offices, and for other purposes.

S. 1437

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1437, a bill to modernize voter registration, promote access to voting for individuals with disabilities, protect the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 1580

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1580, a bill to enhance the transparency, improve the coordination, and intensify the impact of assistance to support access to primary and secondary education for displaced children and persons, including women and girls, and for other purposes.

S. 1989

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1989, a bill to enhance transparency and accountability for online political advertisements by requiring those who purchase and publish such ads to disclose information about the advertisements to the public, and for other purposes.

S. 2076

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2076, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the expansion of activities related to Alzheimer's disease, cognitive decline, and brain health under the Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2101

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2101, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the crew of the USS Indianapolis, in recognition of their perseverance, bravery, and service to the United States.

S. 2463

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 2463, a bill to establish the United States International Development Finance Corporation, and for other purposes.

S. 2554

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2554, a bill to ensure that health insurance issuers and group

health plans do not prohibit pharmacy providers from providing certain information to enrollees.

S. 2578

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2578, a bill to amend title 13, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Commerce to provide advanced notice to Congress before changing any questions on the decennial census, and for other purposes.

S. 2780

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2780, a bill to require a determination on designation of the Russian Federation as a state sponsor of terrorism.

S. 2796

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 2796, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use the authority of the Secretary to conduct and support research on the efficacy and safety of medicinal cannabis, and for other purposes.

S. 2945

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2945, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a housing choice voucher mobility demonstration to encourage families receiving the voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

S. 3116

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3116, a bill to establish an Election Security grant program.

S. 3250

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3250, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow for a credit against tax for rent paid on the personal residence of the taxpayer.

S. RES. 220

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 220, a resolution expressing solidarity with Falun Gong practitioners who have lost lives, freedoms, and rights for adhering to their beliefs and practices and condemning the practice of non-consenting organ harvesting, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 525

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 525, a resolution designating September 2018 as National Democracy Month as a time to reflect on

the contributions of the system of government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

AMENDMENT NO. 3402

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3402 intended to be proposed to H. R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3405

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3405 proposed to H.R. 6147, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 588—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE NEED FOR TRANSPARENCY REGARDING MEETINGS BETWEEN PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP AND RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN

Mr. MERKLEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 588

Whereas it is the unanimous conclusion of the United States intelligence community that the Government of the Russian Federation interfered in the 2016 Presidential election, at the direction of Russian President Vladimir Putin, to advance the candidacy of then-candidate Donald J. Trump;

Whereas President Trump has repeatedly cast doubt on intelligence community conclusions regarding Russia's attacks during the 2016 election and suggested at his Helsinki press conference, as he has in previous statements, that he believes President Putin's denials despite evidence to the contrary;

Whereas President Trump and individuals associated with his 2016 presidential campaign remain subjects of an ongoing investigation led by Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III relating to Russia's efforts to interfere in the 2016 United States presidential election, an investigation which has yielded 32 indictments and 5 guilty pleas to date;

Whereas President Trump reportedly personally requested that his meeting at the July 16, 2018, Helsinki Summit with President Putin be one-on-one and excluded other United States officials; and

Whereas, since the Helsinki Summit, President Trump and President Putin alluded to oral agreements they made, the specifics of which have not been made known publicly: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) President Trump should not meet with President Putin or any official of the Rus-

sian Federation without another senior United States official present; and

(2) the President, or a designee of the President, should within 7 days report to Congress, in the appropriate setting, on the substance of President Trump's meeting with President Putin, including any agreements or commitments made on behalf of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 589—DESIGNATING JULY 28, 2018, AS "NATIONAL DAY OF THE AMERICAN COWBOY"

Mr. ENZI (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. THUNE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BENNET, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Mr. HELLER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 589

Whereas pioneering men and women, recognized as "cowboys", helped to establish the American West;

Whereas the cowboy embodies honesty, integrity, courage, compassion, respect, a strong work ethic, and patriotism;

Whereas the cowboy spirit exemplifies strength of character, sound family values, and good common sense;

Whereas the cowboy archetype transcends ethnicity, gender, geographic boundaries, and political affiliations;

Whereas the cowboy, who lives off the land and works to protect and enhance the environment, is an excellent steward of the land and its creatures;

Whereas cowboy traditions have been a part of American culture for generations;

Whereas the cowboy continues to be an important part of the economy through the work of many thousands of ranchers across the United States who contribute to the economic well-being of every State;

Whereas millions of fans watch professional and working ranch rodeo events annually, making rodeo one of the most-watched sports in the United States;

Whereas membership and participation in rodeo and other organizations that promote and encompass the livelihood of cowboys span every generation and transcend race and gender;

Whereas the cowboy is a central figure in literature, film, and music and occupies a central place in the public imagination;

Whereas the cowboy is an American icon; and

Whereas the ongoing contributions made by cowboys and cowgirls to their communities should be recognized and encouraged: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates July 28, 2018, as "National Day of the American Cowboy"; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 590—RECOGNIZING THE 171ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARRIVAL OF PIONEERS BELONGING TO THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS TO THE GREAT SALT LAKE VALLEY IN UTAH, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS TO THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD

Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. UDALL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 590

Whereas in the years following the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (referred to in this preamble as the "LDS Church") in 1830, the early members of the LDS Church (referred to in this preamble as "Latter-day Saint pioneers") experienced religious persecution manifested through physical assault, destruction of their houses and businesses, theft of their property, exile from their homes, threats of violence and war, imprisonment, rape, and murder;

Whereas the petitions of the LDS Church to the United States Government for assistance and redress were frequently unanswered and produced no relief;

Whereas the leader and prophet of the LDS Church, Joseph Smith, and his brother, Hyrum, were shot and killed by an armed mob;

Whereas in a letter addressed to the President of the United States, James K. Polk, the new leader of the LDS Church, Brigham Young, wrote, "... [W]hile we appreciate the Constitution of the United States as the most precious among the nations, we feel that we had rather retreat to the deserts, islands or mountain caves than consent to be ruled by governors and judges ... who delight in injustice and oppression";

Whereas in pursuit of liberty and religious freedom, the Latter-day Saint pioneers journeyed westward in the winter of 1846, and ultimately travelled more than 1,300 miles of wilderness across vast prairies, barren deserts, jagged mountains, and turbulent rivers;

Whereas the Latter-day Saint pioneers endured extreme weather conditions, illness, hunger, and exhaustion, resulting in the pioneers losing young children, spouses, parents, and friends to exposure, disease, and starvation;

Whereas upon entering the Great Salt Lake Valley in Utah on July 24, 1847, Brigham Young announced, "This is the right place," foretelling how the valley would become home to many Latter-day Saints and their posterity;

Whereas the Latter-day Saint pioneers worked together to plant crops, irrigate fields, and build homes and businesses, transforming the desert into a thriving community where they could live in safety and practice their religion without prejudice and abuse;

Whereas on July 24, 1849, the Latter-day Saints first commemorated their arrival to their new home with a procession to Temple Square in Salt Lake City for a special devotional, followed by a feast of thanksgiving;

Whereas "Pioneer Day" is a Utah State holiday celebrated on July 24th to remember and honor the early settlers with parades, flag ceremonies, re-enactments, devotionals, sporting events, feasts, dances, concerts, festivals, rodeos, and fireworks;

Whereas the Latter-day Saint pioneers helped shape the settlement of the West by constructing bridges, building ferries, clearing trails, establishing communities, planting crops, expanding trade posts, erecting trail markers, and charting maps, all of which assisted thousands of settlers westward;

Whereas the Latter-day Saint pioneers exemplified what can be achieved when industrious and resilient people work diligently and join together as communities to build a stronger and brighter future; and

Whereas the bravery, determination, and ingenuity that the Latter-day Saint pioneers demonstrated inspires citizens of the United States and people across the world to triumph over adversity, to continuously strive toward progress and innovation, and to press forward with unconquerable faith and undaunted hope: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes “Pioneer Day”, on the 171st anniversary of the arrival of the early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (referred to in this resolving clause as “Latter-day Saint pioneers”) to the Great Salt Lake Valley in Utah;

(2) acknowledges the many sacrifices of the Latter-day Saint pioneers in their pursuit of liberty and religious freedom; and

(3) commends the Latter-day Saint pioneers and their descendants for their significant contributions in facilitating the settlement of the West, and providing an example of courage, industry, and faith that inspires people throughout the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 591—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PURPLE HEART RECOGNITION DAY

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TESTER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. THUNE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. NELSON, Mr. DONNELLY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 591

Whereas, on August 7, 1782, during the Revolutionary War, General George Washington established what is now known as the Purple Heart Medal when he issued an order establishing the Badge of Military Merit;

Whereas the Badge of Military Merit was designed in the shape of a heart in purple cloth or silk;

Whereas, while the award of the Badge of Military Merit ceased with the end of the Revolutionary War, the Purple Heart Medal was authorized in 1932 as the official successor decoration to the Badge of Military Merit;

Whereas the Purple Heart Medal is the oldest United States military decoration in present use;

Whereas the Purple Heart Medal is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to recognize members of the Armed Forces who are killed or wounded in action against an enemy of the United States or are killed or wounded while held as prisoners of war;

Whereas the Purple Heart Medal has been awarded to an estimated 1,800,000 recipients; and

Whereas August 7, 2018, is an appropriate day to celebrate as National Purple Heart Recognition Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Purple Heart Recognition Day; and

(2) encourages all people of the United States—

(A) to learn about the history of the Purple Heart Medal;

(B) to honor recipients of the Purple Heart Medal; and

(C) to conduct appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate support for people who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to speak on my resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Purple Heart Recognition Day. I am pleased to have been joined in sponsoring this resolution by the senior senator from West Virginia, Senator MANCHIN, and 22 of our Senate colleagues.

The Purple Heart's history goes as far back as the founding of our Nation. General George Washington established what is now known as the Purple Heart Medal when he issued an order establishing the Military Badge of Merit on August 7, 1782. General Washington wished for the award to be used to recognize meritorious action performed by members of the Continental Army, and it took the form of a purple heart.

The Military Badge of Merit was discontinued after the Revolution and was not revived until 1932, when the Purple Heart medal was authorized as its official successor decoration. On February 22, 1932, the 200th Anniversary of the birth of George Washington, then-Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur resurrected the award, and it was re-designated as the Purple Heart. Quite appropriately, this reestablished Purple Heart Medal exhibits the bust and profile of George Washington.

It is around this time that the Purple Heart became synonymous with those unfortunate heroes who were killed or wounded in combat. Since 1932, the U.S. Military has awarded more than 1.8 million Purple Hearts.

Just as the Purple Heart Medal has held a special meaning to its millions of recipients and their families, it also has special significance to me and my family. My father, who died earlier this year, was a proud World War II veteran who was wounded twice during the Battle of the Bulge. He earned two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star, and it was from him that I first learned to honor and respect our veterans.

Mr. President, the Purple Heart is a reminder that freedom is a gift purchased at the greatest possible price, and it is for that reason that I am sponsoring this resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Purple Heart Recognition Day. I believe it is vitally important for all Americans to learn the history of this important military award, and to understand and honor the sacrifices of the many men and women in uniform who have earned the Purple Heart. I am grateful to all of my colleagues who have joined me in supporting this important resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3409. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3410. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3411. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3412. Mr. JONES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3413. Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. GARDNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3414. Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. GARDNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3415. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3416. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3417. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3418. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3419. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3420. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3421. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3422. Ms. COLLINS (for Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. WICKER)) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra.

SA 3423. Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3424. Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. BURR, Mr. BENNET, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3476. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

SA 3528. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY

to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3529. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3530. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3531. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3532. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3533. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3534. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3535. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3536. Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3537. Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3409. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Of the funds made available for the Department of Housing and Urban Development under the heading "RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY" under the heading "POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH", \$1,000,000 shall be available to provide technical assistance for temporary and permanent housing assistance to communities impacted by a major disaster declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) resulting from flooding, an earthquake, or a volcanic event in 2018.

SA 3410. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending Sep-

tember 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. In carrying out a land management activity on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture, including maintenance and restoration in response to degradation caused by human activity or natural events (such as fire, flood, or infestation), to the extent practicable, the Secretary of Agriculture shall give preference to the use of locally adapted native plant materials.

SA 3411. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV of division A, add the following:

USE OF LOCALLY ADAPTED NATIVE PLANT MATERIALS IN LAND MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES ON FEDERAL LAND

SEC. 43 _____. To complement the implementation by the Bureau of Land Management of a National Seed Strategy to improve seed supplies for restoring healthy and productive native plant communities, the Secretary of the Interior shall give preference, to the maximum extent practicable, to the use of locally adapted native plant materials in carrying out a land management activity on Federal land, including maintenance and restoration activities carried out in response to degradation caused by human activity or natural events, such as fire, flood, or infestation.

SA 3412. Mr. JONES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, line 4, strike "\$88,910,000" and insert "\$91,910,000".

On page 17, line 14, strike "\$5,000,000" and insert "\$8,000,000".

On page 40, line 7, strike "\$134,673,000" and insert "\$137,673,000".

SA 3413. Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. GARDNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 464, line 24, strike "regulation." and insert the following: "regulation: *Provided further*, That not less than \$50,000,000 of the amount provided under this heading shall be available for capital expenses related to safety improvements, maintenance, and the non-Federal match for discretionary

Federal grant programs to enable continued passenger rail operations on long-distance routes (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code) on which Amtrak is the sole tenant of the host railroad and positive train control systems are not required by law (including regulations): *Provided further*, That prior to altering or canceling Amtrak rail service on the National Network (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code), Amtrak shall thoroughly consult with affected communities with the goal of maintaining rail connectivity and service as intended by Congress, including offering opportunities for public input through a notice and comment process."

SA 3414. Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. GARDNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1 _____. It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) long-distance passenger rail routes provide much-needed transportation access for 4,700,000,000 riders in 325 communities in 40 States and are particularly important in rural areas; and

(2) long-distance passenger rail routes and services should be sustained to ensure connectivity throughout the National Network (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code).

SA 3415. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 84, lines 17 and 18, strike "and conducting an international program as authorized, \$333,990,000" and insert "\$324,990,000".

On page 93, strike lines 7 through 23.

SA 3416. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. It is the sense of the Senate that the Administrator of the Small Business Administration should increase the loan limit for the Community Advantage Pilot Program of the Small Business Administration, which helps to provide loans under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) to underserved markets, from \$250,000 to \$350,000.

SA 3417. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 531, strike “10” and insert “15”.

SA 3418. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. The Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall—

(1) work with Federal agencies to ensure that each Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization achieves compliance with the requirements under section 15(k) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(k)); and

(2) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act—

(A) submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on Federal agency compliance with the requirements under such section 15(k); and

(B) issue detailed guidance for the peer review process of the Small Business Procurement Advisory Council in order to facilitate a more in depth review of Federal agency compliance with the requirements under such section 15(k).

SA 3419. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) In this section, the terms “agency” and “small entity” have the meanings given those terms in section 211 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note).

(b) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study and submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report assessing the quality of agency compliance with sections 212 and 213 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note), which shall include—

(1) the extent to which agencies comply with each of the requirements under such section 212;

(2) the extent to which agencies comply with each of the requirements under such section 213, including a summary of the scope of compliance programs of agencies to assist small entities, the number of small entities using each such program, and the achievements of each such program in assist-

ing small entity compliance with agency regulations; and

(3) recommendations for best practices for agencies to address small business regulatory concerns and improve customer service.

SA 3420. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. **SIZE STANDARDS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.**

(a) **CALCULATION ON THE BASIS OF ANNUAL AVERAGE GROSS RECEIPTS.**—Section 3(a)(2)(C)(ii)(II) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)(2)(C)(ii)(II)) is amended by striking “over a period of not less than 3 years” and inserting “, which shall be calculated by using the 3 lowest annual average gross receipts of the business concern during the preceding 5-year period”.

(b) **REGULATIONS.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall promulgate regulations as necessary to implement the amendment made by subsection (a).

SA 3421. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network and the appropriate divisions of the Department of the Treasury shall submit to Congress a report on any Geographic Targeting Orders issued since 2016, including—

(1) the type of data collected;

(2) how the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network uses the data;

(3) whether the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network needs more authority to combat money laundering through high-end real estate; and

(4) how a record of beneficial ownership would improve and assist law enforcement efforts to investigate and prosecute criminal activity and prevent the use of shell companies to facilitate money laundering, tax evasion, terrorism financing, election fraud, and other illegal activity.

SA 3422. Ms. COLLINS (for Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. WICKER)) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “SALARIES AND EXPENSES” under the heading “OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL” under the heading “NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION” in title III of division D, in the fourth proviso, strike “Government.” and insert the

following: “Government: *Provided further*, That not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General shall update the report entitled ‘Effects of Amtrak’s Poor On-Time Performance’, numbered CR-2008-047, and dated March 28, 2008, and make the updated report publicly available.”.

SA 3423. Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV of division A, add the following:

EXPANSION OF CERTAIN AUTHORITIES OF THE HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT OF 2003 TO FIRE REGIME IV AND FIRE REGIME V

SEC. 43 _____. (a) Section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (11) through (16) as paragraphs (13) through (18), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (10) the following:

“(11) **FIRE REGIME IV.**—The term ‘fire regime IV’ means an area—

“(A) in which historically there are stand replacement severity fires with a frequency of 35 through 100 years; and

“(B) that may be located in any vegetation type.”

“(12) **FIRE REGIME V.**—The term ‘fire regime V’ means an area—

“(A) in which historically there are stand replacement severity fires with a frequency of 200 years; and

“(B) that may be located in any vegetation type.”

(b) Section 102(a)(3) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6512(a)(3)) is amended by striking “or fire regime III” and inserting “fire regime III, fire regime IV, or fire regime V”.

(c) Section 603(c) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591b(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **LOCATION.**—

“(A) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this paragraph, the terms ‘condition class 2’, ‘condition class 3’, ‘fire regime I’, ‘fire regime II’, ‘fire regime III’, ‘fire regime IV’, ‘fire regime V’, and ‘wildland-urban interface’ have the meanings given those terms in section 101.

“(B) **LOCATION.**—A project under this section shall be—

“(i) limited to areas in the wildland-urban interface; or

“(ii) for projects located outside the wildland-urban interface, limited to areas within condition class 2 or condition class 3 in fire regime I, fire regime II, fire regime III, fire regime IV, or fire regime V.”

(d) Section 605 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “Hazardous fuels reduction projects, as defined in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511(2))” and inserting “Authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects (as defined in section 101)”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking “and sections 104 and 105”; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “subject to section 106,” before “considered”;

(2) in subsection (b)(1)(A), by striking “to the extent” and all that follows through “disease.”; and

(3) in subsection (c)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “‘Prioritized’” and inserting “‘prioritized’”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “‘If located outside the wildland-urban interface, limited to areas within Condition Classes 2 or 3 in Fire Regime Groups I, II, or III’” and inserting “‘if located outside the wildland-urban interface, limited to areas within condition class 2 or condition class 3 in fire regime I, fire regime II, fire regime III, fire regime IV, or fire regime V (as those terms are defined in section 101)’”; and

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking “‘Limited’” and inserting “‘limited’”.

SA 3424. Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. BURR, Mr. BENNET, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of division A, add the following:

PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION OF LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

SEC. 1 _____. (a) Section 200302 of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “‘During the period ending September 30, 2018, there’” and inserting “‘There’”; and

(2) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “‘through September 30, 2018’”.

(b) Section 200306 of title 54, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) PUBLIC ACCESS.—Not less than 1.5 percent of amounts made available for expenditure in any fiscal year under section 200303, or \$10,000,000, whichever is greater, shall be used for projects that secure recreational public access to existing Federal public land for hunting, fishing, and other recreational purposes.”.

SA 3425. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV of division A, add the following:

ESTABLISHMENT OF SKI AREA FEE RETENTION ACCOUNT

SEC. 43 _____. (a) Section 701 of division I of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (16 U.S.C. 497c) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(k) SKI AREA FEE RETENTION ACCOUNT.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) ACCOUNT.—The term ‘Account’ means the Ski Area Fee Retention Account established under paragraph (2).

“(B) COVERED UNIT.—The term ‘covered unit’ means a National Forest which collects a rental charge under this section.

“(C) REGION.—The term ‘Region’ means a Forest Service Region.

“(D) RENTAL CHARGE.—The term ‘rental charge’ means a permit rental charge that is charged under subsection (a).

“(E) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Agriculture.

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall establish in the Treasury a

special account, to be known as the ‘Ski Area Fee Retention Account’, into which there shall be deposited—

“(A) in the case of a covered unit at which not less than \$15,000,000 is collected by the covered unit from rental charges in a fiscal year, an amount equal to 50 percent of the rental charges collected at the covered unit in the fiscal year; or

“(B) in the case of any other covered unit, an amount equal to 65 percent of the rental charges collected at the covered unit in a fiscal year.

“(3) AVAILABILITY.—Subject to paragraphs (4), (5), and (6), any amounts deposited in the Account under paragraph (2) shall remain available for expenditure, without further appropriation, until expended.

“(4) LOCAL DISTRIBUTION OF AMOUNTS IN THE ACCOUNT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), 100 percent of the amounts deposited in the Account from a specific covered unit shall remain available for expenditure at the covered unit at which the rental charges were collected.

“(B) REDUCTION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), the Secretary may reduce the percentage of amounts available to a covered unit under subparagraph (A) if the Secretary determines that the rental charges collected at the covered unit exceed the reasonable needs of the covered unit for that fiscal year for authorized expenditures described in paragraph (5)(A).

“(ii) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not reduce the percentage of amounts available under clause (i)—

“(I) in the case of a covered unit described in paragraph (2)(A), to less than 35 percent of the amount of rental charges deposited in the Account from the covered unit in a fiscal year; or

“(II) in the case of any other covered unit, to less than 50 percent of the amount of rental charges deposited in the Account from the covered unit in a fiscal year.

“(C) TRANSFER TO OTHER COVERED UNITS.—

“(i) DISTRIBUTION.—If the Secretary determines that the percentage of amounts otherwise available to a covered unit under subparagraph (A) should be reduced under subparagraph (B), the Secretary may transfer to other covered units, for allocation in accordance with clause (ii), the percentage of the amounts withheld from the covered unit under subparagraph (B), to be expended by the other covered units in accordance with paragraph (5).

“(ii) CRITERIA.—In determining the allocation of amounts to be transferred under clause (i) among other covered units, the Secretary shall consider—

“(I) the number of proposals for ski area improvements in the other covered units;

“(II) any backlog in ski area permit administration or the processing of ski area proposals in the other covered units; and

“(III) any need for services, training, staffing, or streamlining programs in the other covered units or the Region in which they are located that would improve the administration of the Forest Service Ski Area Program.

“(5) AUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts distributed from the Account to a covered unit under this subsection may be used for—

“(i) ski area special use permit administration and processing of proposals for ski area improvement projects in the covered unit, including staffing and contracting for such administration, process, or services through the unit or the Region;

“(ii) any expenses that the Forest Service would have otherwise applied to ski area permittees through cost recovery pursuant to

part 251 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

“(iii) training programs on processing ski area applications, administering ski area permits, or ski area process streamlining in the covered unit or the Region in which the unit is located; and

“(iv) interpretation activities, visitor information, visitor services, and signage in the covered unit to enhance—

“(I) the ski area visitor experience on National Forest System land; and

“(II) avalanche information and education activities carried out by the Forest Service.

“(B) OTHER USES.—If any amounts are still available in the Account after all ski area permit-related expenditures under subparagraph (A) are made, including amounts transferred to other covered units pursuant to paragraph (4)(C), such remaining amounts in the Account may be applied to permit administration for other (non-ski area) Forest Service recreation special use permits at the discretion of the Secretary. The Secretary shall first determine that all ski area-related permit administration, processing and interpretation needs have been met in all covered units and Regions before applying any remaining amounts in the Account to non-ski area uses.

“(C) LIMITATION.—Amounts in the Account may not be used for—

“(i) the conduct of wildfire suppression or preparedness activities;

“(ii) the conduct of biological monitoring on National Forest System land under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) for listed species or candidate species, except as required by law for environmental review of ski area projects;

“(iii) the acquisition of land for inclusion in the National Forest System; or

“(iv) Forest Service administrative sites.

“(6) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this subsection affects the applicability of section 7 of the Act of April 24, 1950 (commonly known as the ‘Granger-Thye Act’) (16 U.S.C. 580d), to ski areas on National Forest System land.

“(B) REVENUE ALLOCATION PAYMENTS.—Rental charges deposited in the Account under paragraph (2) shall be considered to be amounts received from the National Forest System for purposes of calculating amounts to be paid under—

“(i) the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.);

“(ii) the sixth paragraph under the heading ‘forest service’ in the Act of May 23, 1908 (35 Stat. 260; 16 U.S.C. 500);

“(iii) section 13 of the Act of March 1, 1911 (36 Stat. 963; 16 U.S.C. 500); and

“(iv) chapter 69 of title 31, United States Code.

“(C) SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING.—Rental charges retained and expended under this subsection shall supplement (and not supplant) appropriated funding for the operation and maintenance of each covered unit.”.

(b) This section (including the amendments made by this section) shall take effect on the date that is 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) The Secretary of Agriculture shall not be required to issue regulations or policy guidance to implement this section (including the amendments made by this section).

SA 3426. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes;

which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II of division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available under this title may be used to provide housing assistance benefits for an individual who is convicted of—

(1) aggravated sexual abuse under section 2241 of title 18, United States Code;

(2) murder under section 1111 of title 18, United States Code; or

(3) any other Federal or State offense involving—

(A) severe forms of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking, as those terms are defined in paragraphs (9) and (10), respectively, of section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102); or

(B) child pornography, as defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code.

SA 3427. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1 _____. ELECTRIC VEHICLE WEIGHT LIMITATION.

Section 127 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(v) ELECTRIC VEHICLES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a vehicle propelled exclusively by means of electric battery power may exceed any vehicle weight limit under this section by an amount that is equal to the difference between—

“(A) the weight of the electric batteries and wiring system of the vehicle; and

“(B) the weight of a comparable diesel tank and fueling system.

“(2) MAXIMUM WEIGHT.—A vehicle propelled exclusively by means of electric battery power may exceed any vehicle weight limit under this section up to a maximum gross vehicle weight of 82,000 pounds.”.

SA 3428. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division ____, insert the following:

SEC. 1 _____. Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on efforts by the Department of Transportation to engage with local communities, metropolitan planning organizations, and regional transportation commissions on advancing data and intelligent transportation systems technologies and other smart cities solutions.

SA 3429. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 436, line 22, strike the period and insert “: *Provided further*, That in distributing funds made available for grants under section 117 of title 23, United States Code, the Secretary shall take into consideration the needs of projects of regional or national significance.”.

SA 3430. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 370, line 20, insert “, of which not less than \$15,000,000 shall be used for inspections of foreign seafood manufacturers and field examinations of imported seafood” after “Affairs”.

SA 3431. Mr. ENZI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, in consultation with the head of each Federal agency that administers a Federal housing assistance program, shall conduct an interdepartmental review of each Federal housing assistance program in order to—

(1) develop a plan for the elimination of programmatic fragmentation, duplication, and overlap among Federal housing assistance programs, as identified by those Federal agencies in consultation with the Government Accountability Office; and

(2) make recommendations to Congress for streamlining Federal housing assistance programs for efficiency to increase the quality of services provided to people in the United States who are the most in need of assistance.

(b) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, in consultation with the head of each Federal agency that administers a Federal housing assistance program, shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on the Budget of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives a detailed report that outlines the efficiencies that can be achieved by, and specific recommendations for, eliminating overlap, duplication, and fragmentation among Federal housing assistance programs.

SA 3432. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr.

SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. 7 _____. (a) The Secretary of Agriculture shall conduct an inventory and evaluation of certain land, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Flatside Wilderness Adjacent Inventory Areas” and dated November 30, 2017, to determine the suitability of that land for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

(b) The inventory and evaluation required under subsection (a) shall be completed not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 3433. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to revoke an exception made—

(1) pursuant to the final rule of the Department of Agriculture entitled “Exceptions to Geographic Areas for Official Agencies Under the USGSA” (68 Fed. Reg. 19137 (April 18, 2003)); and

(2) on a date before April 14, 2017.

SA 3434. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES AT AVIATION EVENTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND RELATED SUPPORT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall provide air traffic services and aviation safety support for aviation events, including airshows and fly-ins, without the imposition or collection of any fee, tax, or other charge for that purpose. Amounts for the provision of such services and support shall be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise available for the Federal Aviation Administration.

(b) DETERMINATION OF SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO BE PROVIDED.—In determining the services and support to be provided for an aviation event for purposes of subsection (a), the Administrator shall take into account the following:

(1) The services and support required to meet levels of activity at prior events, if any, similar to the event.

(2) The anticipated need for services and support at the event.

SA 3435. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title IV of division A, insert the following:

SEC. 4 _____. (a) This subsection and the final rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removal of the Gray Wolf in Wyoming From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Removal of the Wyoming Wolf Population’s Status as an Experimental Population” (77 Fed. Reg. 55530 (September 10, 2012)) that was reinstated on March 3, 2017, by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (No. 14-5300) and republished in the final rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reinstatement of Removal of Federal Protections for Gray Wolves in Wyoming” (82 Fed. Reg. 20284 (May 1, 2017)), that reinstates the removal of Federal protections under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) of the gray wolf in the State of Wyoming, shall not be subject to judicial review.

(b)(1) Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act and notwithstanding any other provision of law that applies to the issuance of a rule, the Secretary of the Interior shall reissue the final rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Revising the Listing of the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) in the Western Great Lakes” (76 Fed. Reg. 81666 (December 28, 2011)).

(2) This subsection and the rule reissued under paragraph (1) shall not be subject to judicial review.

SA 3436. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REPORT ON NEXTGEN IMPLEMENTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of NextGen at commercial service airports in the United States.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The number and percentage of commercial service airports in the United States that have fully implemented NextGen.

(2) The percentage completion of NextGen implementation at each commercial service airport in the United States.

(c) DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD TO DETERMINE PERCENTAGE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEXTGEN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall develop a standard for determining under subsection (b)(2) the percentage completion of NextGen implementation at commercial service airports in the United States based on factors that may include an accounting of efficiency benefits achieved, the degree of NextGen technology and infrastructure installed, and the extent of controller training on NextGen.

(2) INCLUSION IN REPORT.—The Administrator shall include in the report submitted

under subsection (a) the standard developed under paragraph (1).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) NEXTGEN.—The term “NextGen” means the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

SA 3437. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 315, line 13, insert “of which not less than \$2,000,000 shall be available to carry out the dryland agriculture research program,” before “and of which”.

SA 3438. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 531.

SA 3439. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) Section 7(a)(29) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)(29)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(2) by striking “With respect to” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to”;

(3) in clause (i), as so redesignated, by striking “for more than \$250,000” and inserting “, if such loan is in an amount greater than the Federal banking regulator appraisal threshold”;

(4) in clause (ii), as so redesignated, by striking “for \$250,000 or less” and inserting “, if such loan is in an amount equal to or less than the Federal banking regulator appraisal threshold”;

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) FEDERAL BANKING REGULATOR APPRAISAL THRESHOLD DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘Federal banking regulator appraisal threshold’ means the lesser of the threshold amounts set by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for when a federally related transaction that is a commercial real estate transaction requires an appraisal prepared by a State licensed or certified appraiser.”.

(b) Section 502(3)(E)(ii) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 696(3)(E)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(2) by striking “With respect to” and inserting the following:

“(I) IN GENERAL.—With respect to”;

(3) in item (aa), as so redesignated, by striking “is more than \$250,000” and inserting “is more than the Federal banking regulator appraisal threshold”;

(4) in item (bb), as so redesignated, by striking “is \$250,000 or less” and inserting “is equal to or less than the Federal banking regulator appraisal threshold”;

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(II) FEDERAL BANKING REGULATOR APPRAISAL THRESHOLD DEFINED.—For purposes of this clause, the term ‘Federal banking regulator appraisal threshold’ means the lesser of the threshold amounts set by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for when a federally related transaction that is a commercial real estate transaction requires an appraisal prepared by a State licensed or certified appraiser.”.

SA 3440. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to support the development of insect-based foods for human consumption, including cricket farming and taste-testing of insect-based foods.

SA 3441. Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mrs. FISCHER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. SMITH, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. DAINES, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 455, between lines 18 and 19, insert the following:

SEC. 13 _____. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Secretary of Transportation by this Act or any other Act for fiscal year 2019 or any fiscal year thereafter may be used to implement, administer, or enforce sections 31136 and 31502 of title 49, United States Code, or regulations prescribed under those sections, regarding maximum driving and on-duty time for drivers used by motor carriers to transport agricultural commodities or farm supplies for agricultural purposes (as those terms are defined in section 229(e) of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999 (49 U.S.C. 31136 note)) from the sources and to the locations described in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of section 229(a)(1) of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999 (49 U.S.C. 31136 note) at any time of the year or, for drivers used by motor carriers to transport agricultural commodities, within 150

air-miles of the destination of such commodities until—

(1) the Secretary of Transportation has promulgated a regulation to extend the hours of service exemption for drivers transporting agricultural commodities or farm supplies for agricultural purposes from the planting and harvesting periods (as determined by each State) to a year-round exemption; and

(2) the Secretary of Transportation has promulgated a regulation to extend the hours of service exemption for drivers transporting agricultural commodities to such transportation within a 150 air-mile radius from the destination of the agricultural commodities.

SA 3442. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)” under the heading “FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE” under the heading “DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS” in title IV of division C, strike “\$23,184,012,000” and insert “\$23,199,012,000”.

In the matter under the heading “CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)” under the heading “FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE” under the heading “DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS” in title IV of division C, in the fourth proviso, strike “That section 26(d)” and insert “That \$15,000,000 shall be available to carry out section 18(g) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769(g)): *Provided further*, That section 26(d)”.

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

FARMERS’ MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM

SEC. _____. For necessary expenses to carry out the Farmers’ Market and Local Food Promotion Program as authorized by section 6 of the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976 (7 U.S.C. 3005), \$10,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020.

SA 3443. Ms. SMITH (for herself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. _____. (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) PRAIRIE ISLAND RESERVATION.—The term “Prairie Island Reservation” means the Prairie Island Indian Community Reservation in Goodhue County, Minnesota.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) TRIBE.—The term “Tribe” means the Prairie Island Indian Community, a federally recognized Indian tribe.

(b) STUDY OF FEDERAL LANDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out an analysis to determine whether land within the Federal domain is suitable for addition to the Prairie Island Reservation.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—Land shall not be considered suitable for addition to the Prairie Island Reservation unless such land—

(A) consists of contiguous acres of land suitable for housing and economic development;

(B) is located within Minnesota and within 100 miles of the Prairie Island Reservation;

(C) is not subject to compatible use or wildlife-dependent recreational use restrictions pursuant to the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.); and

(D) is not administered by the National Park Service.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress and the Tribe a report detailing the results of the analysis conducted pursuant to paragraph (1).

SA 3444. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Of the funds made available under this Act for the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, not less than \$540,000 shall be made available for low-income and very low-income families affected by any State-mandated fire.

SA 3445. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Section 19(a)(2)(B) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2028(a)(2)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR DISASTER RECOVERY EFFORTS IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019.—

“(I) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Due to the needs associated with disaster recovery efforts in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, in addition to amounts made available under clause (i), there is authorized to be appropriated not more than \$400,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 to make additional payments to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for the expenditures and expenses described in clause (i).

“(II) APPROPRIATION IN ADVANCE.—Except as provided in subclause (III), only amounts appropriated under subclause (I) in advance specifically for the expenditures and expenses described in clause (i) shall be available for payment to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for the expenditures and expenses described in that clause.

“(III) OTHER FUNDS.—Funds appropriated under subclause (I) shall be in addition to funds made available under clause (i).”.

SA 3446. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 6147,

making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

DIRECT PAYMENTS FOR DAIRY FARMERS

SEC. _____. Subtitle D of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9051 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“PART IV—DIRECT PAYMENTS FOR DAIRY FARMERS

“SEC. 1441. DIRECT PAYMENTS FOR DAIRY FARMERS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this part, the Secretary shall provide a 1-time payment to each eligible dairy farmer described in subsection (b) in accordance with this section.

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a payment under this section, a dairy farmer shall—

“(1) be licensed by the Secretary; and

“(2) have had a production history during the 1-year period ending on the date of enactment of this part.

“(c) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of a payment under this section shall be, as determined by the report of the Economic Research Service entitled ‘Milk Cost of Production by Size of Operation Report’ and dated May 1, 2018, equal to the quotient obtained by dividing—

“(A) the product obtained by multiplying—

“(i) the quantity (in pounds) of the national average milk production of a dairy cow;

“(ii) the average number of cows per farm, as determined under paragraph (2);

“(iii) the value of production less total costs, as determined under paragraph (3); and

“(iv) $\frac{1}{2}$; and

“(B) 100.

“(2) AVERAGE NUMBER OF COWS PER FARM.—

The average number of cows per farm under paragraph (1)(A)(ii) shall be determined based on the report described in paragraph (1) as follows:

“(A) In the case of a farm with fewer than 50 cows, the national average number of cows per farm in farms with fewer than 50 cows.

“(B) In the case of a farm with not fewer than 50 cows and not greater than 199 cows, the national average number of cows per farm in farms with not fewer than 50 cows and not greater than 199 cows.

“(C) In the case of a farm with not fewer than 200 cows and not greater than 499 cows, the national average number of cows per farm in farms with not fewer than 200 cows and not greater than 499 cows.

“(D) In the case of a farm with not fewer than 500 cows, the national average number of cows per farm in farms with not fewer than 500 cows.

“(3) VALUE OF PRODUCTION LESS TOTAL COSTS.—The value of production less total costs under paragraph (1)(A)(iii) shall be determined based on the report described in paragraph (1) as follows:

“(A) In the case of a farm with fewer than 50 cows, the national value of production less total costs in farms with fewer than 50 cows.

“(B) In the case of a farm with not fewer than 50 cows and not greater than 199 cows, the national value of production less total costs in farms with not fewer than 50 cows and not greater than 199 cows.

“(C) In the case of a farm with not fewer than 200 cows and not greater than 499 cows, the national value of production less total costs in farms with not fewer than 200 cows and not greater than 499 cows.

“(D) In the case of a farm with not fewer than 500 cows, the national value of production less total costs in farms with not fewer than 500 cows.

“(d) PAYMENT LIMITATION.—The amount of a payment under this section to an eligible dairy farmer described in subsection (b) shall not be greater than \$15,000.

“(e) FUNDING.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$500,000,000.”.

SA 3447. Mr. JONES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, line 4, strike “\$88,910,000” and insert “\$91,910,000”.

On page 17, line 14, strike “\$5,000,000” and insert “\$8,000,000”.

On page 40, line 7, strike “\$134,673,000” and insert “\$131,673,000”.

SA 3448. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 737 of division C, in the proviso, strike “entities” and insert “entities, or comparable entities that provide energy efficiency services using their own billing mechanism,”.

SA 3449. Mr. CASEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)” under the heading “FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE” under the heading “DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS” in title IV of division C, in the first proviso, strike “\$60,000,000” and insert “\$80,000,000”.

SA 3450. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) There is appropriated \$7,000,000 to the Secretary of Agriculture for marketing activities authorized under section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1623(b)) to provide to State departments of agriculture, State coopera-

tive extension services, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations grants to carry out programs and provide technical assistance to promote innovation, process improvement, and marketing relating to dairy products, and the amount made available under the heading “AGRICULTURE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)” in title I of division C shall be \$51,330,000.

SA 3451. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Section 750 of division A of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141), is amended by striking “That for” and inserting “That any fee for switching or routing of benefits imposed by a nonaffiliated subcontractor of any contractor of a State shall not be prohibited if no portion of that fee is shared with or otherwise received by the State or the State’s contractor (or any affiliate of that contractor): *Provided further*, That for”.

SA 3452. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement, administer, or enforce the final rule entitled “Food Labeling: Revision of the Nutrition and Supplement Facts Labels” (81 Fed. Reg. 33742 (May 27, 2016)) to the extent that the rule requires that the nutrition facts panel on the labeling of a single-ingredient food that does not contain any added sugars or sweeteners (such as honey or maple syrup) include a statement that the food contains added sugars.

SA 3453. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 142, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

STUDY OF PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES IN GROUNDWATER

SEC. 433. (a) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the United States Geological Survey (referred to in this section as the “Director”), in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this section as the “Administrator”), shall complete a study to monitor the flow of perfluoroalkyl and

polyfluoroalkyl substances in groundwater flows in not less than 5 regions.

(b) The Director, in consultation with the Administrator, is encouraged to develop a public information campaign to inform impacted communities and the general public of potential exposure to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances resulting from releases in groundwater.

(c) Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Director, in consultation with the Administrator, shall submit to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that describes the findings of the study completed under subsection (a).

SA 3454. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

RESEARCH ON OCEAN AGRICULTURE

SEC. _____. (a) The Secretary of Agriculture, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall establish a working group (referred to in this section as the “working group”)—

(1) to study how mangroves, kelp forests, tidal marshes, and seagrass meadows could help deacidify the oceans;

(2) to study emerging ocean farming practices that use kelp and seagrass to deacidify the oceans while providing feedstock for agriculture and other commercial and industrial inputs; and

(3) to coordinate and conduct research to develop and enhance pilot-scale research for farming of kelp and seagrass in order—

(A) to deacidify ocean environments;

(B) to produce a feedstock for agriculture; and

(C) to develop other scalable commercial applications for kelp, seagrass, or products derived from kelp or seagrass.

(b) The working group shall include—

(1) the Secretary of Agriculture;

(2) the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(3) representatives of any relevant offices within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

(4) the Assistant Secretary of Energy for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

(c) Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the working group shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the findings of the research described in subsection (a);

(2) the results of the pilot-scale research described in subsection (a)(3); and

(3) any policy recommendations based on those findings and results.

SA 3455. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of

the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII of division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act or any other Act may be used—

(1) to prevent a Member of Congress from entering, for the purpose of conducting oversight, any facility located in the United States at which alien minors are housed or otherwise detained;

(2) to require any Member of Congress to coordinate through a Congressional entity for their entry into, for the purpose of conducting oversight, any facility described in paragraph (1); or

(3) to make any temporary modification at a facility described in paragraph (1) that in any way alters what is observed by a visiting Member of Congress, compared to what would be observed in the absence of such modification.

SA 3456. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 151, line 13, strike “\$250,000,000” and insert “\$255,000,000”.

On page 211, line 16, strike “\$9,633,450,000” and insert “\$9,628,450,000”.

SA 3457. Mr. JONES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. The Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall conduct a study on the best practices in and benefits of matchmaking programs for small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans that utilize industry data and business leads provided by entities, such as chambers of commerce, to match those veterans with business opportunities in their industry of interest or geographic location.

SA 3458. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. REED, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. KING, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of division A, add the following:

SEC. 1 _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to issue a lease

for exploration, development, or production of oil or natural gas in any area of the outer Continental Shelf off the coasts of the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, or Connecticut.

SA 3459. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 239, line 19, insert before the period at the end the following: “: *Provided further*, That none of the funds made available under this Act or any other Act may be used to take any action that would impair the fulfillment of the universal service obligation of the United States Postal Service or lead toward the privatization of the United States Postal Service”.

SA 3460. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. SANDERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II of division A, insert the following:

SEC. 2 _____. None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to rescind, revoke, or otherwise modify the document of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency entitled “Endangerment and Cause or Contributing Findings for Greenhouse Gases under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act” and dated December 7, 2009.

SA 3461. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 142, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

FORT ONTARIO SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY

SEC. 433. (a) In this section:

(1) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) The term “study area” means Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York.

(b) The Secretary shall conduct a special resource study of the study area.

(c) In conducting the study under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

(1) evaluate the national significance of the study area;

(2) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the study area as a unit of the National Park System;

(3) consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the study area by the Federal Government, State or local government entities, or private and nonprofit organizations;

(4) consult with interested Federal agencies, State or local governmental entities,

private and nonprofit organizations, or any other interested individuals; and

(5) identify cost estimates for any Federal acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives.

(d) The study required under subsection (b) shall be conducted in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(e) Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to carry out the study under subsection (b), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) the results of the study; and

(2) any conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary.

SA 3462. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of division B, add the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds contained in this Act may be used to enforce section 540 of Public Law 110-329 (122 Stat. 3688) or section 538 of Public Law 112-74 (125 Stat. 976; 6 U.S.C. 190 note).

SA 3463. Mr. CARPER (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of division B (before the short title), add the following:

TITLE IX—POSTAL SERVICE REFORM

SECTION 901. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Postal Service Reform Act of 2018”.

SEC. 902. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this title is as follows:

- Sec. 901. Short title.
- Sec. 902. Table of contents.
- Sec. 903. Definitions.

SUBTITLE A—POSTAL PERSONNEL

- Sec. 921. Postal Service Health Benefits Program.
- Sec. 922. Postal Service retiree health care benefit funding reform.
- Sec. 923. Medicare part B premium subsidy for newly enrolling Postal Service annuitants and family members.
- Sec. 924. Postal Service pension funding reform.
- Sec. 925. Supervisory and other managerial organizations.
- Sec. 926. Right of appeal to Merit Systems Protection Board.

SUBTITLE B—POSTAL SERVICE OPERATIONS REFORM

- Sec. 941. Governance reform.
- Sec. 942. Modernizing postal rates.
- Sec. 943. Nonpostal services.
- Sec. 944. Shipping of wine, beer, and distilled spirits.

- Sec. 945. Efficient and flexible universal postal service.
- Sec. 946. Fair stamp-evidencing competition.
- Sec. 947. Market-dominant rates.
- Sec. 948. Review of Postal Service cost attribution guidelines.
- Sec. 949. Aviation security for parcels.
- Sec. 950. Long-term solvency plan; annual financial plan and budget.
- Sec. 951. Service standards, performance targets, and performance measurements.
- Sec. 952. Postal Service Chief Innovation Officer.
- Sec. 953. Emergency suspensions of post offices.
- Sec. 954. Mailing address requirements.

SUBTITLE C—POSTAL CONTRACTING REFORM

- Sec. 961. Contracting provisions.
- Sec. 962. Technical amendment to definition.

SUBTITLE D—POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION, INSPECTOR GENERAL, RELATED PROVISIONS, AND MISCELLANEOUS

- Sec. 981. Postal Regulatory Commission.
- Sec. 982. Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission.
- Sec. 983. GAO report on fragmentation, overlap, and duplication in Federal programs and activities.

SEC. 903. DEFINITIONS.

In this title, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission” means the Postal Regulatory Commission.

(2) POSTAL RETAIL FACILITY.—The term “postal retail facility”—

(A) means a post office, post office branch, post office classified station, or other facility that is operated by the Postal Service, the primary function of which is to provide retail postal services; and

(B) does not include a contractor-operated facility offering postal services.

(3) POSTAL SERVICE.—The term “Postal Service” means the United States Postal Service.

Subtitle A—Postal Personnel

SEC. 921. POSTAL SERVICE HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 8903b the following:

“§ 8903c. Postal Service Health Benefits Program

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘initial contract year’ means the contract year beginning in January of the first full year that begins not less than 7 months after the date of enactment of this section;

“(2) the term ‘initial participating carrier’ means a carrier that enters into a contract with the Office to participate in the Postal Service Health Benefits Program during the initial contract year;

“(3) the term ‘Medicare eligible individual’ means an individual who—

“(A) is entitled to Medicare part A, but excluding an individual who is eligible to enroll under such part under section 1818 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i-2); and

“(B) is eligible to enroll in Medicare part B;

“(4) the term ‘Medicare part A’ means the Medicare program for hospital insurance benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395c et seq.);

“(5) the term ‘Medicare part B’ means the Medicare program for supplementary med-

ical insurance benefits under part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.);

“(6) the term ‘Medicare part D’ means the Medicare insurance program established under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-101 et seq.);

“(7) the term ‘Office’ means the Office of Personnel Management;

“(8) the term ‘Postal Service’ means the United States Postal Service;

“(9) the term ‘Postal Service annuitant’ means an annuitant enrolled in a health benefits plan under this chapter whose Government contribution is paid by the Postal Service or the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund under section 8906(g)(2);

“(10) the term ‘Postal Service employee’ means an employee of the Postal Service enrolled in a health benefits plan under this chapter;

“(11) the term ‘Postal Service Health Benefits Program’ means the program of health benefits plans established under subsection (c) within the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program under this chapter;

“(12) the term ‘Postal Service Medicare eligible annuitant’ means an individual who—

“(A) is a Postal Service annuitant; and

“(B) is a Medicare eligible individual;

“(13) the term ‘PSHBP plan’ means a health benefits plan offered under the Postal Service Health Benefits Program; and

“(14) the term ‘qualified carrier’ means a carrier for which the total enrollment in the plans provided under this chapter includes, in the contract year beginning in January of the year before the initial contract year, a combined total of 1,500 or more enrollees who are—

“(A) Postal Service employees; or

“(B) Postal Service annuitants.

“(b) APPLICATION OF SECTION.—The requirements under this section shall—

“(1) apply to the initial contract year, and each contract year thereafter; and

“(2) supersede other provisions of this chapter to the extent of any specific inconsistency, as determined by the Office.

“(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POSTAL SERVICE HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall establish the Postal Service Health Benefits Program, which shall—

“(A) consist of health benefits plans offered under this chapter;

“(B) include plans offered by—

“(i) each qualified carrier; and

“(ii) any other carrier determined appropriate by the Office;

“(C) be available for participation by all Postal Service employees, in accordance with subsection (d);

“(D) be available for participation by all Postal Service annuitants, in accordance with subsection (d);

“(E) not be available for participation by an individual who is not a Postal Service employee or Postal Service annuitant (except as a family member of such an employee or annuitant); and

“(F) be implemented and administered by the Office.

“(2) SEPARATE POSTAL SERVICE RISK POOL.—

The Office shall ensure that each PSHBP plan includes rates, one for enrollment as an individual, one for enrollment for self plus one, and one for enrollment for self and family within each option in the PSHBP plan, that reasonably and equitably reflect the cost of benefits provided to a risk pool consisting solely of Postal Service employees and Postal Service annuitants (and family members of such employees and annuitants), taking into specific account the reduction in benefits cost for the PSHBP plan due to the Medicare enrollment requirements under

subsection (e) and any savings or subsidies resulting from subsection (f).

“(3) ACTUARIALLY EQUIVALENT COVERAGE.—The Office shall ensure that each carrier participating in the Postal Service Health Benefits Program provides coverage under the PSHBP plans offered by the carrier that is actuarially equivalent, as determined by the Director of the Office, to the coverage that the carrier provides under the health benefits plans offered by the carrier under the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program that are not PSHBP plans.

“(4) APPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—Except as otherwise set forth in this section, all provisions of this chapter applicable to health benefits plans offered by a carrier under section 8903 or 8903a shall apply to PSHBP plans.

“(5) APPLICATION OF CONTINUATION COVERAGE.—In accordance with rules established by the Office, section 8905a shall apply to PSHBP plans in the same manner as that section applies to other health benefits plans offered under this chapter.

“(d) ELECTION OF COVERAGE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), each Postal Service employee and Postal Service annuitant who elects to receive health benefits coverage under this chapter—

“(A) shall be subject to the requirements under this section; and

“(B) may only enroll in a PSHBP plan.

“(2) ANNUITANTS.—A Postal Service annuitant shall not be subject to this section if the Postal Service annuitant—

“(A) is enrolled in a health benefits plan under this chapter for the contract year before the initial contract year that is not a health benefits plan offered by an initial participating carrier, unless the Postal Service annuitant voluntarily enrolls in a PSHBP plan;

“(B) resides in a geographic area—

“(i) for which there is not a PSHBP plan in which the Postal Service annuitant may enroll; or

“(ii) in which there is a lack of participating Medicare part B providers; or

“(C) would not derive benefit from enrolling in Medicare part B because of comprehensive medical coverage provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs or other programs.

“(3) EMPLOYEES.—A Postal Service employee who is enrolled in a health benefits plan under this chapter for the contract year immediately preceding the initial contract year that is not a health benefits plan offered by an initial participating carrier shall not be subject to the requirements under this section, except that—

“(A) if the Postal Service employee changes enrollment to a different health benefits plan under this chapter during the open season for the initial contract year, or after the start of the initial contract year, the Postal Service employee may only enroll in a PSHBP plan;

“(B) if the health benefits plan in which the Postal Service employee is enrolled for such contract year becomes available as a PSHBP plan, the Postal Service employee may only enroll in a PSHBP plan;

“(C) upon becoming a Postal Service annuitant, if the Postal Service employee elects to continue coverage under this chapter, the Postal Service employee shall enroll in a PSHBP plan during—

“(i) the open season that is being held when the Postal Service employee becomes a Postal Service annuitant; or

“(ii) if the date on which the Postal Service employee becomes a Postal Service annuitant falls outside of an open season, the first open season following that date; and

“(D) subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) shall not apply to an employee who resides in a geographic area for which there is not a PSHBP plan in which the employee may enroll.

“(e) REQUIREMENT OF MEDICARE ENROLLMENT.—

“(1) POSTAL SERVICE MEDICARE ELIGIBLE ANNUITANTS.—A Postal Service Medicare eligible annuitant subject to this section may not continue coverage under the Postal Service Health Benefits Program unless the Postal Service Medicare eligible annuitant enrolls in Medicare part A, Medicare part B, and Medicare part D (as part of a prescription drug plan described in subsection (f)(2)).

“(2) MEDICARE ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS.—If a family member of a Postal Service annuitant who is subject to this section is a Medicare eligible individual, the family member may not be covered under the Postal Service Health Benefits Program as a family member of the Postal Service annuitant unless the family member enrolls in Medicare part A, Medicare part B, and Medicare part D (as part of a prescription drug plan described in subsection (f)(2)).

“(3) PROCESS FOR COORDINATED ELECTION OF ENROLLMENT UNDER MEDICARE PART B.—The Office shall establish a process under which—

“(A) Postal Service annuitants and family members who are subject to the requirements of paragraph (1) or (2)—

“(i) are informed, at the time of enrollment under this chapter, of such requirement; and

“(ii) except as provided in paragraph (4), as a consequence of such enrollment are deemed to have elected to be enrolled under Medicare part B (under subsection (m)(1) of section 1837 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395p)) in connection with the enrollment in a PSHBP plan under this chapter; and

“(B) the Office provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Commissioner of Social Security in a timely manner with such information respecting such annuitants and family members and such election as may be required to effect their enrollment and coverage under Medicare part B and this section in a timely manner.

“(4) WAIVER FOR EXTREME FINANCIAL HARDSHIP.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Postal Service, in consultation with recognized labor organizations and management organizations, shall establish a waiver program under which the requirement to enroll in Medicare part B under paragraph (1) or (2), as applicable, is waived for Postal Service annuitants and family members who demonstrate extreme financial hardship.

“(B) EFFECT OF WAIVER.—If the applicable requirement described in subparagraph (A) is waived for a Postal Service annuitant or family member—

“(i) the Postal Service shall notify the Office of the waiver; and

“(ii) the annuitant or family member shall not be deemed to have elected to be enrolled under Medicare part B as described in paragraph (3)(A)(i).

“(f) MEDICARE COORDINATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall require each PSHBP plan to provide benefits for Medicare eligible individuals pursuant to the standard coordination of benefits method used under this chapter, rather than the exclusion method or the carve-out method.

“(2) MEDICARE PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS.—The Office shall require each PSHBP plan to provide qualified prescription drug coverage for Postal Service annuitants and family members who are part D eligible individuals (as defined in section 1860D-1(a)(3)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-101(a)(3)(A)) under a prescrip-

tion drug plan under Medicare part D pursuant to the provisions of section 1860D-22(b) (commonly referred to as an ‘employer group waiver plan’). For purposes of the preceding sentence, the carrier offering the PSHBP plan shall be deemed to be the sponsor of the plan for purposes of Medicare part D.

“(g) POSTAL SERVICE CONTRIBUTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (i), for purposes of applying section 8906(b) to the Postal Service, the weighted average shall be calculated in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3).

“(2) WEIGHTED AVERAGE CALCULATION.—Not later than October 1 of each year (beginning with the year before the initial contract year), the Office shall determine the weighted average of the rates established pursuant to subsection (c)(2) for PSHBP plans that will be in effect during the following contract year with respect to—

“(A) enrollments for self only;

“(B) enrollments for self plus one; and

“(C) enrollments for self and family.

“(3) WEIGHTING IN COMPUTING RATES FOR INITIAL CONTRACT YEAR.—In determining such weighted average of the rates for the initial contract year, the Office shall take into account (for purposes of section 8906(a)(2)) the enrollment of Postal Service employees and annuitants in the health benefits plans offered by the initial participating carriers as of March 31 of the year before the initial contract year.

“(h) RESERVES.—

“(1) SEPARATE RESERVES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall ensure that each PSHBP plan maintains separate reserves (including a separate contingency reserve) with respect to the enrollees in the PSHBP plan in accordance with section 8909.

“(B) REFERENCES.—For purposes of the Postal Service Health Benefits Program, each reference to ‘the Government’ in section 8909 shall be deemed to be a reference to the Postal Service.

“(C) AMOUNTS TO BE CREDITED.—The reserves (including the separate contingency reserve) maintained by each PSHBP plan shall be credited with a proportionate amount of the funds in the existing reserves for health benefits plans offered by an initial participating carrier.

“(2) DISCONTINUATION OF PSHBP PLAN.—In applying section 8909(e) relating to a PSHBP plan that is discontinued, the Office shall credit the separate Postal Service contingency reserve maintained under paragraph (1) for that plan only to the separate Postal Service contingency reserves of the PSHBP plans continuing under this chapter.

“(i) NO EFFECT ON EXISTING LAW.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as affecting section 1005(f) of title 39 regarding variations, additions, or substitutions to the provisions of this chapter.

“(j) MEDICARE EDUCATION PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Postal Service shall establish a Medicare Education Program, under which the Postal Service shall—

“(1) notify annuitants and employees of the Postal Service about the Postal Service Health Benefits Program;

“(2) provide information regarding the Postal Service Health Benefits Program to such annuitants and employees, including—

“(A) a description of the health care options available under the Postal Service Health Benefits Program;

“(B) the requirement that annuitants be enrolled in Medicare under subsection (e)(1); and

“(C) the premium subsidies under section 923 of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018; and

“(3) respond and provide answers to any inquiry from such annuitants and employees

about the Postal Service Health Benefits Program or Medicare enrollment.”.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 8903(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “two levels of benefits” and inserting “2 levels of benefits for enrollees under this chapter generally and 2 levels of benefits for enrollees under the Postal Service Health Benefits Program established under section 8903c”.

(B) The table of sections for chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 8903b the following:

“8903c. Postal Service Health Benefits Program.”.

(b) COORDINATION WITH MEDICARE.—

(1) MEDICARE ENROLLMENT AND COVERAGE.—Section 1837 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395p) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(m)(1) In the case of an individual who—

“(A) is (i) a Postal Service Medicare eligible annuitant, or (ii) an individual who is a family member of such an annuitant and is a Medicare eligible individual;

“(B) enrolls in a PSHBP plan under section 8903c of title 5, United States Code; and

“(C) is not enrolled under this part, the individual is deemed, in accordance with section 8903c(e)(3) of such title, to have elected to be enrolled under this part.

“(2) In the case of an individual who is deemed to have elected to be enrolled under paragraph (1), the coverage period under this part shall begin on the date that the individual first has coverage under the PSHBP plan pursuant to the enrollment described in paragraph (1)(B).

“(3) The provisions of section 1838(b) shall apply to an individual who is deemed to have elected to be enrolled under paragraph (1).

“(4) The Secretary, the Commissioner of Social Security, the United States Postal Service, and the Office of Personnel Management shall coordinate to monitor premiums paid by individuals who are deemed to have elected to be enrolled under paragraph (1) for purposes of determining whether those individuals are in compliance with the applicable requirements under section 8903c(e) of title 5, United States Code.

“(5) The definitions in section 8903c(a) of title 5, United States Code, shall apply for purposes of this subsection.”.

(2) WAIVER OF INCREASE OF PREMIUM.—Section 1839(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395r(b)) is amended by inserting after “section 1837,” the following: “and not pursuant to a deemed enrollment under subsection (m) of such section during the open season for the initial contract year (as defined in section 8903c(a) of title 5, United States Code) of the Postal Service Health Benefits Program.”.

(3) CONFORMING COORDINATION OF BENEFIT RULES.—Section 1862(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395y(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(10) COORDINATION OF BENEFITS WITH POSTAL SERVICE HEALTH BENEFITS PLANS.—Paragraphs (1) through (9) shall apply except to the extent that the Secretary, in consultation with the Office of Personnel Management, determines those paragraphs to be inconsistent with section 8903c(f) of title 5, United States Code.”.

SEC. 922. POSTAL SERVICE RETIREE HEALTH CARE BENEFIT FUNDING REFORM.

(a) CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 8906(g) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “(2)(A) The Government” and inserting “(2)(A)(i) The Government”;

and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in clause (i), as added by paragraph (1), by striking “shall through September 30, 2016, be paid” and all that follows and inserting the following: “shall be paid as provided in clause (ii).”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) With respect to the Government contributions required to be paid under clause (i)—

“(I) the portion of the contributions that is equal to the amount of the net claims costs under the enrollment of the individuals described in clause (i) shall be paid from the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund up to the amount contained in the Fund; and

“(II) any remaining amount shall be paid by the United States Postal Service.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) For purposes of this paragraph, the amount of the net claims costs under the enrollment of an individual described in subparagraph (A)(i) shall be the amount, as determined by the Office over any particular period of time, equal to the difference between—

“(i) the sum of—

“(I) the costs incurred by a carrier in providing health services to, paying for health services provided to, or reimbursing expenses for health services provided to, the individual and any other person covered under the enrollment of the individual; and

“(II) an amount of indirect expenses reasonably allocable to the provision, payment, or reimbursement described in subclause (I), as determined by the Office; and

“(ii) the amount withheld from the annuity of the individual or otherwise paid by the individual under this section.

“(D) Any computation by the Office under this section that relates to an individual described in subparagraph (A)(i) of this paragraph shall be made in consultation with the United States Postal Service.”.

(b) **POSTAL SERVICE RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS FUND.**—Section 8909a(d) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “Office” and inserting “United States Postal Service”; and

(B) by striking “required under section 8906(g)(2)(A)” and inserting the following: “required to be paid from the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund under section 8906(g)(2)(A)(ii)(I).”; and

(2) by striking paragraphs (2) and (4);

(3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(4) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) The United States Postal Service shall make sufficient payments into the Fund, in accordance with paragraphs (4) and (5)(B), so that the value of the assets of the Fund is equal to the Postal Service actuarial liability.

“(3)(A) Not later than June 30, 2020, the United States Postal Service shall compute, and by June 30 of each succeeding year, the United States Postal Service shall recompute, a schedule including a series of annual installments that provide for the liquidation of the amount described under subparagraph (B) (regardless of whether the amount is a liability or surplus) by September 30 of the first fiscal year that begins 40 years after the date of enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018 (unless the schedule is extended as provided in paragraph (4)(C)(ii)(II)), including interest at the rate used in the computations under this subsection.

“(B) The amount described in this subparagraph is the amount, as of the date on which the applicable computation or recomputation under subparagraph (A) is made, that is equal to the difference between—

“(i) 80 percent of the Postal Service actuarial liability as of September 30 of the preceding fiscal year; and

“(ii) the value of the assets of the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund as of September 30 of the preceding fiscal year.”;

(5) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in clause (iii), by adding “and” at the end;

(ii) in clause (iv), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period; and

(iii) by striking clauses (v) through (x);

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) in clause (i), by striking “paragraph (1)” and inserting “paragraph (1), except to the extent the payment would cause the value of the assets in the Fund to exceed the Postal Service actuarial liability”; and

(ii) in clause (ii)—

(I) by inserting “except as provided in subparagraph (C),” before “any”; and

(II) by striking “paragraph (2)(B).” and inserting “paragraph (3).”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C)(i) Upon request by the United States Postal Service, the Postal Regulatory Commission may waive the annual installment payment required to be made in a fiscal year under subparagraph (B)(ii) if the United States Postal Service meets conditions established by the Postal Regulatory Commission related to—

“(I) financial stability and retained earnings; and

“(II) the capability to maintain a high level of service.

“(ii) If the Postal Regulatory Commission waives the annual installment payment required to be made in a fiscal year under subparagraph (B)(ii)—

“(I) for purposes of any financial reporting by the United States Postal Service, the payment shall be deemed to have been made; and

“(II) the United States Postal Service shall extend the liquidation schedule under paragraph (3)(A) by 1 year.

“(iii) If the United States Postal Service does not request a waiver of the annual installment payment required to be made in a fiscal year under subparagraph (B)(ii) and does not make the payment, the United States Postal Service may not increase rates for market-dominant products under section 3622 of title 39 during the following fiscal year.”;

(6) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (8);

(7) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

“(5)(A) Concurrently with each computation or recomputation under paragraph (3), the United States Postal Service shall compute the amount, as of the date of the computation, that is equal to the difference between—

“(i) the Postal Service actuarial liability as of September 30 of the preceding fiscal year; and

“(ii) the value of the assets of the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund as of September 30 of the preceding fiscal year.

“(B) If the United States Postal Service disposes of any property owned or leased by the United States Postal Service, and, based on the most recent computation under subparagraph (A), the amount described in clause (i) of that subparagraph is greater than the amount described in clause (ii) of that subparagraph, the United States Postal Service shall pay into the Fund the lesser of—

“(i) the amount of net profit to the United States Postal Service resulting from the disposal of property (as determined by the Postal Regulatory Commission); or

“(ii) the amount computed under subparagraph (A).

“(C) The United States Postal Service shall make each payment required under subparagraph (B) without regard to whether the United States Postal Service has completed the annual installment payments required under paragraph (4)(B)(ii), as scheduled under paragraph (3)(A).

“(6) Computations under this subsection shall be based on—

“(A) economic and actuarial methods and assumptions consistent with the methods and assumptions used in determining the Postal surplus or supplemental liability under section 8348(h); and

“(B) any other methods and assumptions, including a health care cost trend rate, that the Director of the Office determines to be appropriate.

“(7)(A) The Office shall provide to the United States Postal Service any data necessary for computations under this subsection.

“(B) Upon computing an amount or schedule under this subsection for a fiscal year, the United States Postal Service shall provide the data used for the computation to the Postal Regulatory Commission for review of the computation.

“(C) Not later than 30 days after receiving data from the United States Postal Service under subparagraph (B), the Postal Regulatory Commission, in consultation with the United States Postal Service, shall—

“(i) determine whether the amount or schedule was computed in accordance with this subsection;

“(ii) if the amount or schedule was computed in accordance with this subsection, submit to the Office a certification that the amount or schedule is the definitive amount or schedule for that fiscal year; and

“(iii) if the amount or schedule was not computed in accordance with this subsection, request that the Office recompute the amount or schedule.

“(D)(i) Not later than 30 days after receiving a request from the Postal Regulatory Commission under subparagraph (C)(iii), the Office shall recompute the amount or schedule.

“(ii) If the Office recomputes an amount or schedule under clause (i), the recomputed amount or schedule shall be the definitive amount or schedule for that fiscal year for purposes of this subsection.”; and

(8) by adding at the end the following:

“(9) In this subsection, the term ‘Postal Service actuarial liability’ means the difference between—

“(A) the net present value of future payments required to be paid from the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund under section 8906(g)(2)(A)(ii)(I) for current and future United States Postal Service annuitants; and

“(B) the net present value as computed under paragraph (1) attributable to the future service of United States Postal Service employees.

“(10) For purposes of computing an amount under paragraph (1) or (9)(A), section 8906(g)(2)(A)(ii)(I) shall be applied as though ‘up to the amount contained in the Fund’ were struck.”.

(c) **CANCELLATION OF CERTAIN UNPAID OBLIGATIONS OF THE POSTAL SERVICE.**—Any obligation of the Postal Service under section 8909a(d)(3)(A) of title 5, United States Code, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, that remains unpaid as of such date of enactment is canceled.

(d) **ONE-TIME TRANSFER TO MEDICARE FUNDS.**—

(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection—

(A) the term “applicable fiscal year” means the first fiscal year beginning on or after October 1, 2021, in which the amount computed under paragraph (3)(B) of section

8909a(d) of title 5, United States Code (as amended by subsection (b)) is a surplus; and

(B) the term “Medicare fund” means—

(i) the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund under section 1817 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i);

(ii) the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395t); and

(iii) the Medicare Prescription Drug Account under section 1860D-16 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-116).

(2) **TRANSFER REQUIRED.**—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the schedule under paragraph (3)(A) of section 8909a(d) of title 5, United States Code (as amended by subsection (b)) in the applicable fiscal year is certified by the Commission or recomputed by the Office of Personnel Management, as applicable under paragraph (6) of such section 8909a(d)—

(A) the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

(i) estimate the amount of the increased expenditures required from the Medicare funds, including the amount required from each such fund, by reason of the requirements under section 8903c(e) of title 5, United States Code (as added by section 921(a)(1) of this title) for the 10-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(ii) notify the Secretary of the Treasury and the Postal Service of the amount estimated under clause (i); and

(B) the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund to the Medicare funds an amount equal to the amount estimated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under subparagraph (A)(i), in accordance with paragraph (3) of this subsection.

(3) **DISTRIBUTION.**—An amount transferred under subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) shall be divided among the Medicare funds in proportion to the increased expenditures required from each such fund, as estimated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under subparagraph (A)(i) of that paragraph.

(e) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—The heading of section 8909a of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “**Benefit**” and inserting “**Benefits**”.

(f) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section is intended to establish a precedent with respect to Federal employees at large, given that the Postal Service is a unique entity within the Federal Government and benefits for employees of the Postal Service are only partially integrated with benefits for Federal employees at large.

SEC. 923. MEDICARE PART B PREMIUM SUBSIDY FOR NEWLY ENROLLING POSTAL SERVICE ANNUITANTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

(1) the term “eligible individual” means a Postal Service annuitant, or a family member of a Postal Service annuitant, who—

(A) newly enrolls in Medicare part B during the open season for the initial contract year pursuant to a deemed enrollment under subsection (m) of section 1837 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395p), as added by section 921 of this title; and

(B) is not eligible for Medicare cost-sharing or any other subsidies for Medicare part B premium payments;

(2) the term “initial contract year” has the meaning given the term in section 8903c(a) of title 5, United States Code, as added by section 921 of this title;

(3) the term “Medicare cost-sharing” means Medicare cost-sharing described in section 1905(p)(3)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(p)(3)(A)(ii)) under a State

plan under title XIX of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.);

(4) the term “Medicare part B” means the Medicare program for supplementary medical insurance benefits under part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.); and

(5) the term “Postal Service annuitant” has the meaning given the term in section 8903c(a) of title 5, United States Code, as added by section 921 of this title.

(b) **SUBSIDIES.**—With respect to the monthly Medicare part B premium payments of eligible individuals (taking into account any adjustments, including those under subsections (b) and (i) of section 1839 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395r)), the Postal Service—

(1) in the initial contract year, shall subsidize 75 percent of the Medicare part B premium payments;

(2) in the first year after the initial contract year, shall subsidize 50 percent of the Medicare part B premium payments; and

(3) in the second year after the initial contract year, shall subsidize 25 percent of the Medicare part B premium payments.

(c) **FUND.**—The Postal Service shall establish a fund to provide the subsidies required under subsection (b).

SEC. 924. POSTAL SERVICE PENSION FUNDING REFORM.

(a) **CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM.**—Section 8348(h) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking subparagraphs (B) and (C) and inserting the following:

“(B) The Office shall redetermine the Postal surplus or supplemental liability as of the close of the fiscal year, for each fiscal year beginning after September 30, 2016. Subject to subparagraph (C), beginning June 15, 2019, if the result is a surplus or a supplemental liability, the Office shall establish an amortization schedule, including a series of annual installments commencing on September 30 of the subsequent fiscal year, which provides for the liquidation of the surplus or liability to the Postal Service or the Fund (as the case may be) by September 30, 2044.

“(C) Not later than June 30, 2034, the Office shall determine, and thereafter shall redetermine as necessary, but not more frequently than once per year, the appropriate date by which to complete the liquidation of any remaining surplus or liability determined under this paragraph. The appropriate date shall be determined in accordance with generally accepted actuarial practices and principles and shall not be later than 15 years after the date on which the determination is made.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) For the purpose of carrying out paragraph (1), for fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Office shall use—

“(A) demographic factors specific to current and former employees of the United States Postal Service, unless such data cannot be generated; and

“(B) economic assumptions regarding wage and salary growth that reflect the specific past, and likely future, pay for current employees of the United States Postal Service.”.

(b) **FEDERAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM LIABILITY ASSUMPTION REFORM.**—Section 8423 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (i), by striking “subparagraph (B),” and inserting “subparagraph (B) or (C),”; and

(II) in clause (ii), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) the product of—

“(i) the normal-cost percentage, as determined for employees (other than employees covered by subparagraph (B)) of the United States Postal Service under paragraph (5), multiplied by

“(ii) the aggregate amount of basic pay payable by the United States Postal Service, for the period involved, to employees of the United States Postal Service.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(5)(A) In determining the normal-cost percentage for employees of the United States Postal Service for purposes of paragraph (1)(C), the Office shall use—

“(i) demographic factors specific to such employees, unless such data cannot be generated; and

“(ii) economic assumptions regarding wage and salary growth that reflect the specific past, and likely future, pay for such employees.”.

“(B) The United States Postal Service shall provide any data or projections the Office requires in order to determine the normal-cost percentage for employees of the United States Postal Service, consistent with subparagraph (A).

“(C) The Office shall review the determination of the normal-cost percentage for employees of the United States Postal Service and make such adjustments as the Office considers necessary—

“(i) upon request of the United States Postal Service, but not more frequently than once each fiscal year; and

“(ii) at such other times as the Office considers appropriate.

“(6) For the purpose of carrying out subsection (b)(1)(B), and consistent with paragraph (5), for fiscal year 2018, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Office shall use—

“(A) demographic factors specific to current and former employees of the United States Postal Service, unless such data cannot be generated; and

“(B) economic assumptions regarding wage and salary growth that reflect the specific past, and likely future, pay for current employees of the United States Postal Service.”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

“(5)(A) In this paragraph, the term ‘postal funding surplus’ means the amount by which the amount of the supplemental liability computed under paragraph (1)(B) is less than zero.

“(B) If the amount of supplemental liability computed under paragraph (1)(B) as of the close of any fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018 is less than zero, the Office shall establish an amortization schedule, including a series of equal annual installments that—

“(i) provide for the liquidation of the postal funding surplus in 30 years, commencing on September 30 of the subsequent fiscal year; and

“(ii) shall be transferred to the Postal Service Fund.”.

SEC. 925. SUPERVISORY AND OTHER MANAGERIAL ORGANIZATIONS.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Postal Service shall submit to Congress a report on compliance by the Postal Service with outcomes of consultative discussions under section 1004(e) of title 39, United States Code, held with postal management organizations on changes in, or termination of, pay policies and schedules and fringe benefit programs for members of the postal

management organization, including changes in, or termination of, policies governing pay-for-performance systems covering supervisory and management employees.

SEC. 926. RIGHT OF APPEAL TO MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD.

Section 1005(a)(4)(A)(ii)(I) of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(I) is an employee of the Postal Service or the Office of the Inspector General who is not represented by a bargaining representative recognized under section 1203; and”.

Subtitle B—Postal Service Operations Reform

SEC. 941. GOVERNANCE REFORM.

(a) BOARD OF GOVERNORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 202 of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 202. Board of Governors

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Postal Service a Board of Governors composed of 5 Governors, a Postmaster General, and a Deputy Postmaster General, all of whom shall be appointed in accordance with this section. The Governors shall have the power to—

“(1) exercise the powers of the Postal Service, consistent with section 203(c);

“(2) appoint, fix the term of service of, and remove the Postmaster General;

“(3) in consultation with the Postmaster General, appoint, fix the term of service of, and remove the Deputy Postmaster General;

“(4) set the strategic direction of postal operations and approve the pricing and product strategy for the Postal Service;

“(5) set the compensation of the Postmaster General and the Deputy Postmaster General in accordance with private sector best practices, as determined by the Governors pursuant to section 3686; and

“(6) carry out any other duties specifically provided for in this title.

“(b) APPOINTMENT; PAY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Governors shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, not more than 3 of whom may be adherents of the same political party. The Governors shall elect a Chair from among their members. The Governors shall represent the public interest generally, and shall be chosen solely on the basis of their experience in the field of public administration, law, or accounting, or on their demonstrated ability in managing organizations or corporations (in either the public or private sector) of substantial size, except that at least 3 of the Governors shall be chosen solely on the basis of their demonstrated ability in managing organizations or corporations (in either the public or private sector) that employ at least 10,000 employees. The Governors shall not be representatives of specific interests using the Postal Service, and may be removed only for cause.

“(2) COMPENSATION.—Each Governor shall receive a salary of \$30,000 a year plus \$300 a day for not more than 42 days of meetings each year and shall be reimbursed for travel and reasonable expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Board. Nothing in the preceding sentence shall be construed to limit the number of days of meetings each year to 42 days.

“(3) CONSULTATION.—In selecting the individuals described in paragraph (1) for nomination for appointment to the position of Governor, the President should consult with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the Senate, and the minority leader of the Senate.

“(c) TERMS OF GOVERNORS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The terms of the 5 Governors shall be 7 years, except that the terms of the 5 Governors first taking office shall expire as designated by the President at the time of appointment, 1 at the end of 1 year, 1 at the end of 2 years, 1 at the end of 3 years, 1 at the end of 4 years, and 1 at the end of 5 years, following the appointment of the first of them. Any Governor appointed to fill a vacancy before the expiration of the term for which the Governor's predecessor was appointed shall serve for the remainder of such term. A Governor may continue to serve after the expiration of the Governor's term until such Governor's successor has qualified, but not to exceed one year.

“(2) LIMITATION.—No individual may serve more than 2 terms as a Governor.

“(d) STAFF.—The Chair of the Board of Governors shall ensure that the Board has appropriate independent staff to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the Board and the Governors.”.

(2) APPLICATION.—Any individual serving as a Governor on the Board of Governors of the Postal Service on the date of enactment of this Act shall continue to serve as a Governor until the term applicable to such individual expires (as determined under section 202(b) of title 39, United States Code, as in effect before the amendments made by this section take effect pursuant to subsection (g)).

(b) POSTMASTER GENERAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 203 of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 203. Postmaster General

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The chief executive officer of the Postal Service is the Postmaster General, appointed pursuant to section 202(a)(2). The alternate chief executive officer of the Postal Service is the Deputy Postmaster General, appointed pursuant to section 202(a)(3).

“(b) POWERS.—Consistent with the requirements of this title, the exercise of the power of the Postal Service shall be vested in the Governors and carried out by the Postmaster General in a manner consistent with the strategic direction and pricing and product strategy approved by the Governors. The Postmaster General shall, in accordance with bylaws determined appropriate by the Board, consult with the Governors and the Deputy Postmaster General in carrying out such power.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The item relating to section 203 in the table of sections for chapter 2 of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“203. Postmaster General.”.

(c) PROCEDURES OF THE BOARD.—Section 205 of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 205. Procedures of the Board of Governors and the Governors

“(a) VACANCIES.—Vacancies in the Board shall not impair the powers of the Board or the Governors under this title.

“(b) VOTE.—The Board and the Governors shall act upon majority vote of those members who are present, subject to such quorum requirements as the Board and the Governors may respectively establish.

“(c) LIMITATION.—No officer or employee of the United States may serve concurrently as a Governor. A Governor may hold any other office or employment not inconsistent or in conflict with the Governor's duties, responsibilities, and powers as an officer of the Government of the United States in the Postal Service.”.

(d) DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY.—Section 402 of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 402. Delegation of authority

“(a) POSTMASTER GENERAL.—The Postmaster General may delegate his or her authority under such terms, conditions, and limitations, including the power of redelegation, as he or she determines desirable. The Postmaster General may establish such committees of officers and employees of the Postal Service, and delegate such powers to any committee, as the Postmaster General determines appropriate to carry out his or her functions and duties. Delegations under this section shall be consistent with other provisions of this title, shall not relieve the Postmaster General of full responsibility for the carrying out the Postmaster General's duties and functions, and shall be revocable by the Postmaster General.

“(b) BOARD OF GOVERNORS.—The Board may establish such committees of the Board, and delegate such powers to any committee, as the Board determines appropriate to carry out its functions and duties. Delegations to committees shall be consistent with other provisions of this title, shall not relieve the Board of full responsibility for the carrying out of its duties and functions, and shall be revocable by the Board in its exclusive judgment.”.

(e) INTERNATIONAL POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 407 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) After submission to the Postal Regulatory Commission by the Department of State of the budget detailing the estimated costs of carrying out the activities under this section, and the Commission's review and approval of such submission, the Postal Service shall transfer to the Department of State, from any funds available to the Postal Service, such sums as may be reasonable, documented, and auditable for the Department of State to carry out such activities.”.

(2) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on October 1 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 633 of title VI of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277; 39 U.S.C. 407 note) is amended by striking subsection (d).

(f) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 102(3)—

(A) by striking “9 members” and inserting “5 members”; and

(B) by striking “section 202(a)” and inserting “section 202(b)(1)”;

(2) in section 204—

(A) by striking “the Board” and inserting “the Postmaster General”; and

(B) by striking “the Governors and”;

(3) in section 207, by striking “the Board” and inserting “the Postal Service”;

(4) in section 414(b)(2), by striking “the Governors” each place the term appears and inserting “the Postal Service”;

(5) in section 416(c)—

(A) by striking “the Governors” and inserting “the Postal Service”; and

(B) by striking “they” and inserting “the Postal Service”;

(6) in section 1011, by striking “the Board” and inserting “the Postal Service”;

(7) by striking section 2402 and inserting the following:

“§ 2402. Annual report

“The Postmaster General shall render an annual report concerning the operations of the Postal Service under this title to the President and Congress.”;

(8) in section 3632—

(A) by striking the section heading, and inserting “**Establishment of rates and classes of competitive products**”;

(B) by striking subsection (a) and redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (a) and (b), respectively;

(C) in paragraph (a)(2) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B)), by striking “and the record of the Governors’ proceedings in connection with such decision”;

(D) in paragraph (a)(3) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B))—

(i) by striking “and the record of the proceedings in connection with such decision”; and

(ii) by striking “the Governors consider” and inserting “the Postal Service considers”;

(E) by striking “the Governors” each place the term appears and inserting “the Postal Service”; and

(9) in the table of sections for chapter 36, by striking the item relating to section 3632 and inserting the following:

“3632. Establishment of rates and classes of competitive products.”

(g) **DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 942. MODERNIZING POSTAL RATES.

(a) **ADEQUACY, EFFICIENCY, AND FAIRNESS OF POSTAL RATES.**—

(1) **OBJECTIVES.**—Section 3622(b) of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2), by inserting “and ensure” after “create”;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by inserting “and meet” after “maintain”; and

(ii) by inserting “, with a focus on achieving predictable and consistent delivery” before the period at the end;

(C) in paragraph (5), by inserting “establish and” before “maintain”;

(D) in paragraph (6), by striking “process” and inserting “and cost attribution processes”; and

(E) in paragraph (9), by inserting “(and to ensure appropriate levels of transparency)” before the period at the end.

(2) **FACTORS.**—Section 3622(c) of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(c) **FACTORS.**—In establishing or revising such system, the Postal Regulatory Commission shall take into account the following factors:

“(1) The effect of rate increases upon the general public and business mail users.

“(2) The available alternative means of sending and receiving written communications, information, and letters and other mail matter at reasonable costs.

“(3) The reliability of delivery timelines and the extent to which the Postal Service is meeting its service standard obligations.

“(4) The need to ensure that the Postal Service has adequate revenues and has taken appropriate cost-cutting measures to maintain financial stability and meet all legal obligations.

“(5) The extent to which the Postal Service has taken actions to increase its efficiency and reduce its costs.

“(6) The value of the mail service actually provided by each class or type of mail service to both the sender and the recipient, including the collection, mode of transportation, and priority of delivery.

“(7) The requirement that each class of mail or type of mail service bear the direct and indirect postal costs attributable to each class or type of mail service through reliably identified causal relationships plus that portion of all other costs of the Postal Service reasonably assignable to such class or type.

“(8) The degree of preparation of mail for delivery into the postal system performed by the mailer and its effect upon improving efficiency and reducing costs to the Postal Service.

“(9) Simplicity of structure for the entire schedule and simple, identifiable relationships between the rates or fees charged the various classes of mail for postal services.

“(10) The importance of pricing flexibility to encourage increased mail volume and operational efficiency.

“(11) The relative value to postal users of the kinds of mail matter entered into the postal system and the desirability and justification for special classifications and services of mail.

“(12) The importance of providing classifications with extremely high degrees of reliability and speed of delivery and of providing those that do not require high degrees of reliability and speed of delivery.

“(13) The desirability of special classifications for both postal users and the Postal Service in accordance with the policies of this title, including agreements between the Postal Service and postal users, when available on public and reasonable terms to similarly situated mailers, that—

“(A) improve the net financial position of the Postal Service by reducing Postal Service costs or increasing the overall contribution to the institutional costs of the Postal Service; and

“(B) do not cause—

“(i) unfair competitive advantage for the Postal Service or postal users eligible for the agreements; or

“(ii) unreasonable disruption to the volume or revenues of other postal users.

“(14) The educational, cultural, scientific, and informational value to the recipient of mail matter.

“(15) The need for the Postal Service to increase its efficiency and reduce its costs, including infrastructure costs, to help maintain high quality, affordable postal services.

“(16) The value to the Postal Service and postal users of promoting intelligent mail and of secure, sender-identified mail.

“(17) The importance of stability and predictability of rates to ratepayers.

“(18) The policies of this title as well as such other factors as the Commission determines appropriate.”

(3) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Section 3622(d) of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (E) as subparagraphs (C) through (F), respectively;

(ii) in subparagraph (F) (as redesignated by clause (i)) by striking “subparagraphs (A) and (C)” and inserting “subparagraphs (A) and (D)”; and

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) subject to paragraph (4), establish postal rates for each group of functionally equivalent agreements between the Postal Service and users of the mail that—

“(i) cover attributable cost;

“(ii) improve the net financial position of the Postal Service; and

“(iii) do not cause unreasonable disruption in the marketplace, consistent with subsection (c)(13)(B);”;

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) **GROUP OF FUNCTIONALLY EQUIVALENT AGREEMENTS DEFINED.**—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B), a group of functionally equivalent agreements shall consist of all service agreements that are functionally equivalent to each other within the same market-dominant product, but shall not include agreements within an experimental product.”

(4) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 3622 of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “, within 18 months after the date of enactment of this section,”; and

(B) in subsection (d)(1)(D) (as redesignated by paragraph (3)(A)), by striking “(c)(10)” and inserting “(c)(13)”.

(b) **USE OF NEGOTIATED SERVICE AGREEMENTS.**—

(1) **STREAMLINED REVIEW OF QUALIFYING SERVICE AGREEMENTS FOR COMPETITIVE PRODUCTS.**—Section 3633 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **STREAMLINED REVIEW.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, after notice and opportunity for comment, the Postal Regulatory Commission shall promulgate (and may from time to time thereafter revise) regulations for streamlined after-the-fact review of newly proposed agreements between the Postal Service and users of the mail that provide rates not of general applicability for competitive products. Streamlined review shall apply only if agreements are functionally equivalent to existing agreements that have collectively covered attributable costs and collectively improved the net financial position of the Postal Service. The regulations issued under this subsection shall provide that streamlined review shall be concluded not later than 5 business days after the date on which the agreement is filed with the Commission and shall be limited to approval or disapproval of the agreement as a whole based on the Commission’s determination of its functional equivalence. Agreements not approved may be resubmitted without prejudice under section 3632.”

(2) **SUBMISSION OF SERVICE AGREEMENTS FOR STREAMLINED REVIEW.**—Section 3632(b) of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) **RATES FOR STREAMLINED REVIEW.**—In the case of rates not of general applicability for competitive products that the Postal Service considers eligible for streamlined review under section 3633(c), the Postal Service shall cause the agreement to be filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission by a date that is on or before the effective date of any new rate established under the agreement, as the Postal Service considers appropriate.”

(3) **TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SERVICE AGREEMENTS.**—

(A) **CERTAIN INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE INCLUDED IN DETERMINATIONS OF COMPLIANCE.**—Section 3653 of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(i) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), and (e) as subsections (d), (e), and (f), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) **WRITTEN DETERMINATION.**—Each annual written determination of the Commission under this section shall include the following:

“(1) **REQUIREMENTS.**—For each group of functionally equivalent agreements between the Postal Service and users of the mail, whether such group fulfilled requirements to—

“(A) cover costs attributable; and

“(B) improve the net financial position of the Postal Service.

“(2) **NONCOMPLIANCE.**—Any group of functionally equivalent agreements not meeting the requirements under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) shall be determined to be in noncompliance under this subsection.

“(3) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, a group of functionally equivalent agreements shall consist of 1 or more service agreements that are functionally equivalent to each other within the same market-dominant or competitive product, but shall not include agreements within an experimental product.”.

(B) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 3653(d) of title 39, United States Code (as redesignated by subparagraph (A)), is amended by striking “subsections (c) and (e)” and inserting “subsections (c) and (d)”.

SEC. 943. NONPOSTAL SERVICES.

(a) NONPOSTAL SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Part IV of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 36 the following:

“CHAPTER 37—NONPOSTAL SERVICES

“Sec.

“3701. Purpose.

“3702. Definitions.

“3703. Postal Service program for State governments.

“3704. Postal Service program for other Government agencies.

“3705. Transparency and accountability for nonpostal services.

“§ 3701. Purpose

“The purpose of this chapter is to enable the Postal Service to increase its net revenues through specific nonpostal products and services that are expressly authorized by this chapter. Postal Service revenues and expenses under this chapter shall be funded through the Postal Service Fund.

“§ 3702. Definitions

“In this chapter—

“(1) the term ‘attributable costs’ has the meaning given the term ‘costs attributable’ in section 3631;

“(2) the term ‘nonpostal service’ means a service offered by the Postal Service that—

“(A) is expressly authorized under this chapter; and

“(B) is not a postal product or service; and

“(3) the term ‘year’ means a fiscal year.

“§ 3703. Postal Service program for State governments

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, the Postal Service may establish a program to enter into agreements with an agency of any State government, local government, or tribal government to provide property and services on behalf of such agencies for non-commercial products and services (referred to in this section as the ‘program’), but only if such property and services—

“(1) provide enhanced value to the public, such as by lowering the cost or raising the quality of such services or by making such services more accessible;

“(2) do not interfere with or detract from the value of postal services, including—

“(A) the cost and efficiency of postal services; and

“(B) unreasonably restricting access to postal retail service, such as customer waiting time and access to parking; and

“(3) provide a reasonable contribution to the institutional costs of the Postal Service, defined as reimbursement that covers at least 100 percent of attributable costs of all property and services provided under each relevant agreement in each year.

“(b) PUBLIC NOTICE.—At least 90 days before offering a service under the program, the Postal Service shall make available to the public on its website—

“(1) the agreement with the agency regarding such service; and

“(2) a business plan that describes the specific service to be provided, the enhanced value to the public, terms of reimbursement,

the estimated annual reimbursement to the Postal Service, and the estimated percentage of attributable Postal Service costs that will be covered by reimbursement (with documentation to support the estimates).

“(c) PUBLIC COMMENT.—Before offering a service under the program, the Postal Service shall provide for a public comment period of at least 30 days that allows the public to post comments relating to the provision of such services on the Postal Service website. The Postal Service shall make reasonable efforts to provide written responses to the comments on such website at least 30 days before offering such services.

“(d) APPROVAL REQUIRED.—The Postal Service may not establish the program unless a majority of the Governors in office vote to approve the program by a recorded vote that is publicly disclosed on the Postal Service website.

“(e) APPLICATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of the reporting requirements under section 3705, the Postal Service shall submit a separate report for each agreement with an agency entered into under subsection (a) of this section analyzing the costs, revenues, rates, and quality of service for the provision of all services under such agreement, including information demonstrating that the agreement satisfies the requirements of paragraphs (1) through (3) of such subsection (a).

“(f) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—The Postal Regulatory Commission shall issue such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section.

“(g) DEFINITIONS.—For the purpose of this section—

“(1) the term ‘local government’ means a county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments, or regional or interstate government entity;

“(2) the term ‘State government’ includes the government of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States;

“(3) the term ‘tribal government’ means the government of an Indian tribe, as that term is defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304); and

“(4) the term ‘United States’, when used in a geographical sense, means the States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

“(h) CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—Subsection (b) or (c) shall not be construed as requiring the Postal Service to disclose to the public any information—

“(1) described in section 410(c); or

“(2) exempt from public disclosure under section 552(b) of title 5.

“§ 3704. Postal Service program for other Government agencies

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Postal Service may establish a program to provide property and services to other Government agencies within the meaning of section 411, but only if the program provides a reasonable contribution to the institutional costs of the Postal Service, defined as reimbursement by each agency that covers at least 100 percent of the attributable costs of all property and service provided by the Postal Service in each year to such agency.

“(b) APPLICATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of the reporting re-

quirements under section 3705, the Postal Service shall submit a separate report for each agreement with an agency entered into under subsection (a) of this section analyzing the costs, revenues, rates, and quality of service for the provision of all services under such agreement, including information demonstrating that the agreement satisfies the requirements of such subsection (a).

“§ 3705. Transparency and accountability for nonpostal services

“(a) ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the last day of each year, the Postal Service shall submit to the Postal Regulatory Commission a report that analyzes costs, revenues, rates, and quality of service for each agreement for the provision of property and services under this chapter, using such methodologies as the Commission may prescribe, and in sufficient detail to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

“(2) SUPPORTING MATTER.—A report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include any nonpublic annex, the working papers, and any other supporting matter of the Postal Service and the Inspector General related to the information submitted in such report.

“(b) CONTENT AND FORM OF REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Postal Regulatory Commission shall, by regulation, prescribe the content and form of the report required under subsection (a). In prescribing such regulations, the Commission shall give due consideration to—

“(A) providing the public with timely, adequate information to assess compliance;

“(B) avoiding unnecessary or unwarranted administrative effort and expense on the part of the Postal Service; and

“(C) protecting the confidentiality of information that is commercially sensitive or is exempt from public disclosure under section 552(b) of title 5.

“(2) REVISED REQUIREMENTS.—The Commission may, on its own motion or on request of any interested party, initiate proceedings to improve the quality, accuracy, or completeness of Postal Service data required by the Commission if—

“(A) the attribution of costs or revenues to property or services under this chapter has become significantly inaccurate or can be significantly improved;

“(B) the quality of service data provided to the Commission for a report under this chapter has become significantly inaccurate or can be significantly improved; or

“(C) such revisions are, in the judgment of the Commission, otherwise necessitated by the public interest.

“(c) AUDITS.—The Inspector General shall regularly audit the data collection systems and procedures used in collecting information and preparing the report required under subsection (a). The results of any such audit shall be submitted to the Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission.

“(d) CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Postal Service determines that any document or portion of a document, or other matter, which it provides to the Postal Regulatory Commission in a nonpublic annex under this section contains information that is described in section 410(c) or exempt from public disclosure under section 552(b) of title 5, the Postal Service shall, at the time of providing such matter to the Commission, notify the Commission of its determination, in writing, and describe with particularity the documents (or portions of documents) or other matter for which confidentiality is sought and the reasons therefor.

“(2) TREATMENT.—Any information or other matter described in paragraph (1) to

which the Commission gains access under this section shall be subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 504(g) in the same manner as if the Commission had received notification with respect to such matter under section 504(g)(1).

“(e) ANNUAL COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION.—

“(1) OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT.—Upon receiving a report required under subsection (a), the Postal Regulatory Commission shall promptly—

“(A) provide an opportunity for comment on such report by any interested party; and

“(B) appoint an officer of the Commission to represent the interests of the general public.

“(2) DETERMINATION OF COMPLIANCE OR NONCOMPLIANCE.—Not later than 90 days after receiving a report required under subsection (a), the Postal Regulatory Commission shall make a written determination as to whether the nonpostal activities carried out during the applicable year were or were not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter. For purposes of this paragraph, any case in which the requirements for coverage of attributable costs have not been met shall be considered to be a case of noncompliance. If, with respect to a year, no instance of noncompliance is found to have occurred, the determination shall be to that effect. Such determination of noncompliance shall be included with the annual compliance determination required under section 3653.

“(3) NONCOMPLIANCE.—If a timely written determination of noncompliance is made under paragraph (2), the Postal Regulatory Commission shall take appropriate action. If the requirements for coverage of attributable costs specified by this chapter are not met, the Commission shall, within 60 days after the determination, prescribe remedial action to restore compliance as soon as practicable, including the full restoration of revenue shortfalls during the following year. The Commission may order the Postal Service to discontinue a nonpostal service under section 3703 that persistently fails to meet cost coverage requirements.

“(4) DELIBERATE NONCOMPLIANCE.—In the case of deliberate noncompliance by the Postal Service with the requirements of this chapter, the Postal Regulatory Commission may order, based on the nature, circumstances, extent, and seriousness of the noncompliance, a fine (in the amount specified by the Commission in its order) for each incidence of such noncompliance. All receipts from fines imposed under this subsection shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury.

“(f) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—The Postal Regulatory Commission shall issue such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section.”.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for part IV of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 36 the following:

“37. Nonpostal services 3701”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECTION 404.—Section 404(e) of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2), by inserting after “subsection” the following: “, or any nonpostal products or services authorized by chapter 37”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) Licensing which, before the date of enactment of this paragraph, has been authorized by the Postal Regulatory Commission for continuation as a nonpostal service may not be used for any purpose other than—

“(A) to continue to provide licensed mailing, shipping, or stationery supplies offered as of June 23, 2011; or

“(B) to license other goods, products, or services, the primary purpose of which is to promote and enhance the image or brand of the Postal Service.

“(7) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Postal Service from establishing nonpostal products and services that are expressly authorized by chapter 37.”.

(2) SECTION 411.—The last sentence of section 411 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking “including reimbursability” and inserting “including reimbursability within the limitations of chapter 37”.

(3) TREATMENT OF EXISTING NONPOSTAL SERVICES.—All individual nonpostal services, provided directly or through licensing, that are continued pursuant to section 404(e) of title 39, United States Code, shall be considered to be expressly authorized by chapter 37 of such title (as added by subsection (a)(1)) and shall be subject to the requirements of such chapter.

SEC. 944. SHIPPING OF WINE, BEER, AND DISTILLED SPIRITS.

(a) MAILABILITY.—

(1) NONMAILABLE ARTICLES.—Section 1716(f) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking “mails” and inserting “mails, except to the extent that the mailing is allowable under section 3001(p) of title 39”.

(2) APPLICATION OF LAWS.—Section 1161 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting “, and, with respect to the mailing of distilled spirits, wine, or malt beverages (as those terms are defined in section 117 of the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (27 U.S.C. 211)), is in conformity with section 3001(p) of title 39” after “Register”.

(b) REGULATIONS.—Section 3001 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(p)(1) In this subsection, the terms ‘distilled spirits’, ‘wine’, and ‘malt beverage’ have the same meanings as in section 117 of the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (27 U.S.C. 211).

“(2) Distilled spirits, wine, or malt beverages shall be considered mailable if mailed—

“(A) in accordance with the laws and regulations of—

“(i) the State, territory, or district of the United States where the sender or duly authorized agent initiates the mailing; and

“(ii) the State, territory, or district of the United States where the addressee or duly authorized agent takes delivery; and

“(B) to an addressee who is at least 21 years of age—

“(i) who provides a signature and presents a valid, government-issued photo identification upon delivery; or

“(ii) the duly authorized agent of whom—

“(I) is at least 21 years of age; and

“(II) provides a signature and presents a valid, government-issued photo identification upon delivery.

“(3) The Postal Service shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the earlier of—

(1) the date on which the Postal Service issues regulations under section 3001(p) of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this section; and

(2) the date that is 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) NO PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL, OR TRIBAL LAWS PROHIBITING DELIVERIES, SHIPMENTS, OR SALES.—Nothing in this section, the amendments made by this section, or any regulation promulgated under this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to preempt, supersede, or

otherwise limit or restrict any State, local, or tribal law that prohibits or regulates the delivery, shipment, or sale of distilled spirits, wine, or malt beverages (as those terms are defined in section 117 of the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (27 U.S.C. 211)).

SEC. 945. EFFICIENT AND FLEXIBLE UNIVERSAL POSTAL SERVICE.

(a) CONDITIONS REGARDING DETERMINATIONS FOR POST OFFICE CLOSINGS.—Clause (i) of section 404(d)(2)(A) of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(i) the effect of such closing or consolidation on the community served by such post office, including through an analysis of—

“(I) the distance (as measured by public roads) to the closest postal retail facility not proposed for closing or consolidation under the determination;

“(II) the characteristics of such location, including weather and terrain;

“(III) whether commercial mobile service (as defined in section 332 of the Communications Act of 1934) and commercial mobile data service (as defined in section 6001 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012) are available in at least 80 percent of the total geographic area of the ZIP codes served by the postal retail facility proposed for closing or consolidation; and

“(IV) whether fixed broadband Internet access service is available to households in at least 80 percent of such geographic area at speeds not less than those sufficient for service to be considered broadband for purposes of the most recent report of the Federal Communications Commission under section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302);”.

(b) PRC REVIEW OF DETERMINATIONS TO CLOSE OR CONSOLIDATE A POST OFFICE.—

(1) DEADLINE FOR REVIEW.—Section 404(d)(5) title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking “120 days” and inserting “60 days, or a longer period for good cause shown but in no event longer than 120 days.”.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to an appeal received by the Commission before the date of enactment of this Act (as determined by applying the rules set forth in section 404(d)(6) of such title).

(c) EXPEDITED PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3661 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d)(1) The Commission shall issue its opinion within 90 days, or a longer period for good cause shown but in no event longer than 120 days, after the receipt of any proposal (as referred to in subsection (b)) concerning an identical or substantially identical proposal on which the Commission has issued an opinion within the preceding 5 years.

“(2) If necessary in order to comply with the 90-day requirement under paragraph (1), the Commission may apply expedited procedures which the Commission shall by regulation prescribe.”.

(2) REGULATIONS.—The Commission shall prescribe any regulations necessary to carry out the amendment made by paragraph (1) within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(3) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply with respect to any proposal received by the Commission on or after the earlier of—

(A) the date that is 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act; or

(B) the effective date of the regulations prescribed under paragraph (2).

(d) ALTERNATE POSTAL ACCESS CHOICE.—Section 404(d) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) Prior to making a determination under subsection (a)(3) as to the necessity for the closing or consolidation of a post office—

“(A) the Postal Service shall provide adequate notice of its intention to close or consolidate the post office not later than 60 days before the proposed date of the closing or consolidation to postal patrons served by the post office;

“(B) the Postal Service shall conduct a nonbinding survey on the proposed closing or consolidation to allow postal patrons served by the post office an opportunity to indicate their preference between or among—

“(i) the closing or consolidation; and

“(ii) 1 or more alternative options; and

“(C) if the Postal Service determines that closing or consolidating the post office is necessary—

“(i) the Postal Service shall endeavor to provide alternative access to postal services to the postal patrons served by the post office by the option chosen by the highest number of survey respondents under subparagraph (B)(ii); and

“(ii) if the Postal Service is unable to provide alternative access through the option identified under clause (i), or if that option is cost prohibitive—

“(I) the Postal Service may provide alternative access through a different method; and

“(II) upon selecting an alternative access method other than the option identified under clause (i), the Postal Service shall provide written notice to the postal patrons served by the post office identifying the alternative access method and explaining why the option identified under clause (i) was not possible or was cost prohibitive.”

(e) **APPLICABILITY OF PROCEDURES RELATING TO CLOSINGS AND CONSOLIDATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 404(d) of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this section, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(7) For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘post office’ means a post office and any other postal retail facility, as defined in section 903 of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018.”

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—In the case of any post office, as defined in subsection (d) of section 404 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by paragraph (1), that, but for that amendment, would not otherwise be subject to such subsection (d), the amendments made by subsections (a) and (d) of this section shall be effective with respect to any closure or consolidation, the proposed effective date of which occurs on or after the date that is 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(f) **ENHANCED REPORTING ON POSTAL SERVICE EFFICIENCY.**—Section 3652(a) of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) which shall provide the overall change in Postal Service productivity and the resulting effect of such change on overall Postal Service costs during such year, using such methodologies as the Commission shall by regulation prescribe, if necessary.”

(g) **POSTPLAN STUDY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Postal Service shall conduct a 1-year review of the impacts of the POSTPlan post office restructuring plan on Postal Service expenses, revenue, and retail service provision.

(2) **CONTENT.**—In conducting the review under paragraph (1), the Inspector General shall examine—

(A) changes in the costs for the provision of Postal Service operated retail service, both nationwide and in the aggregate for each of the Level 2, Level 4, Level 6, and Level 18 post offices for which the hours, functions, or responsibilities changed as a result of the POSTPlan initiative before and after the implementation of the POSTPlan initiative;

(B) changes in revenue received by Postal Service operated retail service, both nationwide and in the aggregate for each of the Level 2, Level 4, Level 6, and Level 18 post offices for which the hours, functions, or responsibilities changed as a result of the POSTPlan initiative before and after the implementation of the POSTPlan initiative;

(C) a determination of the relative cost savings, taking into account any changes in revenue earned, realized on an annual basis for Level 2, Level 4, Level 6, and Level 18 offices each in the aggregate and any trends in such cost savings;

(D) the relative impact on retail access to postal services for individuals served by Level 2, Level 4, Level 6, and Level 18 offices each in the aggregate; and

(E) any other factors the Inspector General determines appropriate.

(3) **REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Upon completion of the review required under paragraph (1), the Inspector General shall submit to the Postal Service, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report containing—

(A) the results of the review; and

(B) any recommendations resulting from such review.

(4) **POSTAL SERVICE REVIEW.**—Prior to any hour changes or consolidation decisions related to POSTPlan initiative-impacted post offices, the Postal Service shall—

(A) review the report and any recommendations submitted pursuant to paragraph (3); and

(B) revise any planned efforts regarding the POSTPlan initiative, as appropriate.

SEC. 946. FAIR STAMP-EVIDENCING COMPETITION.

Section 404(a) of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking “or” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) offer to the public any postage-evidencing product or service that does not comply with any rule or regulation that would be applicable to such product or service if the product or service were offered by a private company.”

SEC. 947. MARKET-DOMINANT RATES.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF RATE BASELINE.**—Notwithstanding any order of the Commission to the contrary—

(1) not earlier than the first Sunday after the date of enactment of this Act, on a date selected by the Postmaster General in the exercise of the Postmaster General’s unreviewable discretion, the Postal Service shall reinstate, as nearly as is practicable, 50 percent of the rate surcharge implemented under section 3622(d)(1)(F) (as redesignated by this title) that was in effect on April 9, 2016; and

(2) the partially reinstated surcharge reinstated pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be considered a part of the rate base for purposes of determining the percentage changes in rates when the Postal Service files a notice of rate adjustment.

(b) **SUBSEQUENT RATE INCREASES.**—The reinstatement described under subsection (a)(1) may not affect the calculation of the Postal Service’s maximum rate adjustment authority under subpart C of part 3010 of title 39, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), for purposes of any rate increase that occurs following such reinstatement.

(c) **COMMISSION REVIEW OF SYSTEM FOR REGULATING RATES AND CLASSES FOR MARKET-DOMINANT PRODUCTS.**—

(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection—

(A) the term “initial rate regulation review” means the proceeding conducted under the order of the Commission entitled, “Statutory Review of the System for Regulating Market Dominant Rates and Classifications” (81 Fed. Reg. 9507 (December 20, 2016)); and

(B) the term “underwater product” means a market-dominant class, product, or type of mail service that does not bear the direct and indirect costs attributable to that class, product, or type of mail service under current costing procedures.

(2) **UNDERWATER PRODUCTS STUDY.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission, without delaying completion of the initial rate regulation review, shall begin a study, in conjunction with the Inspector General of the Postal Service and including notice and opportunity for public comment, to—

(A) determine whether and to what extent any market-dominant classes, products, or types of mail service are underwater products;

(B) quantify the impact of any operational decisions of the Postal Service on the direct and indirect costs attributable to any underwater products identified under subparagraph (A); and

(C) determine whether any operational decisions of the Postal Service have caused any direct or indirect costs to be inappropriately attributed to any underwater product identified under subparagraph (A).

(3) **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (4), the Commission shall supplement and modify, as appropriate, the record of proceedings in the initial rate regulation review, taking into account the provisions of this title and the amendments made by this title, before making a determination to—

(i) modify the system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products established under section 3622 of title 39, United States Code; or

(ii) adopt an alternative system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products.

(B) **MINIMUM CONSIDERATIONS.**—In supplementing or modifying the record under subparagraph (A)—

(i) the Commission shall, at a minimum, recalculate the projected liabilities of the Postal Service by reason of the requirements under section 8903(c) of title 5, United States Code (as added by section 921(a)(1) of this title) (requiring Medicare-eligible postal annuitants enrolled in the Postal Service Health Benefits Program to also enroll in Medicare); and

(ii) if the Commission determines that other provisions of this title or the amendments made by this title reduce liabilities or increase revenues of the Postal Service, the Commission shall incorporate those changes into the calculations of the Commission.

(C) **CONSIDERATION OF UNDERWATER PRODUCTS STUDY.**—After completing any supplementation and modification of the record under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and quantifying the impact of operational decisions under paragraph (2)(B), the Commission shall—

(i) take into account the impact quantified under paragraph (2)(B) and modify, if appropriate, the record under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph;

(ii) incorporate the findings of the study under paragraph (2) into any subsequent adjustment to rates for underwater products identified under subparagraph (A) of that paragraph; and

(iii)(I) account for the cultural and informational value that underwater products identified under paragraph (2)(A) have to the mail; and

(II) recognize that—

(aa) the services provided by the Postal Service have changed over time; and

(bb) the timely delivery of the underwater products identified under paragraph (2)(A) impacts the overall value of those products.

(4) **SUBSEQUENT REVIEW REQUIRED IF INITIAL REVIEW COMPLETED BEFORE ENACTMENT.**—If, on or before the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission completes the initial rate regulation review, the Commission—

(A) shall determine whether to—

(i) further modify the system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products established under section 3622 of title 39, United States Code; or

(ii) adopt an alternative system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products; and

(B) in making the determination under subparagraph (A), shall—

(i) take into account the provisions of this title and the amendments made by this title;

(ii) comply with the requirements under clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (3)(B); and

(iii) take into account, and incorporate into any adjustment to rates for underwater products identified under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2), the impact quantified under subparagraph (B) of that paragraph.

(5) **APPLICATION OF NEW RATES TO UNDERWATER PRODUCTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—If the Commission modifies the system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products established under section 3622 of title 39, United States Code, or adopts an alternative system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products, the Commission—

(i) may not apply any new rates under the modified or alternative system to underwater products until the Commission has—

(I) completed the study under paragraph (2); and

(II) complied with subparagraph (C) of paragraph (3); and

(ii) in order to offer as many underwater products as possible for as long as possible, shall establish a process to gradually phase in the application of any new rates to underwater products.

(B) **RETROACTIVE APPLICABILITY.**—If, before the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission modifies the system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products established under section 3622 of title 39, United States Code, or adopts an alternative system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products, the Commission—

(i) shall, effective 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, apply the rates for underwater products that were in effect on the day before the date on which the modified or alternative system took effect; and

(ii) before applying the rates under the modified or alternative system to underwater products, shall comply with subparagraph (A).

(C) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to affect the requirement under subsection (a) relating to reinstatement of the rate surcharge that was in effect on April 9, 2016, including with respect to underwater products.

(d) **POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION AUTHORITY NOT AFFECTED.**—Nothing in this section (other than subsection (c)) shall be construed as affecting the authority of the Commission to, by regulation, make such modification or adopt such alternative system for regulating rates and classes for market-dominant products as provided under section 3622 of title 39, United States Code.

SEC. 948. REVIEW OF POSTAL SERVICE COST ATTRIBUTION GUIDELINES.

Not later than April 1, 2020, the Commission shall initiate a review of the regulations issued pursuant to sections 3633(a) and 3652(a)(1) of title 39, United States Code, to determine whether revisions are appropriate to ensure that all direct and indirect costs attributable to competitive and market-dominant products are properly attributed to those products, including by considering the underlying methodologies in determining cost attribution and considering options to revise such methodologies. If the Commission determines, after notice and opportunity for public comment, that revisions are appropriate, the Commission shall make modifications or adopt alternative methodologies as necessary.

SEC. 949. AVIATION SECURITY FOR PARCELS.

Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Postal Service shall transmit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate the results of a review of the security measures in place for parcels carried on air carriers to domestic and international destinations for which audit trails are generated. The review required under this subsection shall assess, at a minimum—

(1) the effectiveness of the audit trail created by postage evidencing systems that have been validated under the Federal Information Processing Standards in accurately and consistently identifying the senders of parcels carried on air carriers;

(2) the effectiveness of the Postal Service's in-person identity verification procedures in accurately and consistently identifying the senders of parcels carried on air carriers; and

(3) the effectiveness of the audit trail generated by customs declarations in accurately and consistently identifying the senders of parcels carried on air carriers to international destinations.

SEC. 950. LONG-TERM SOLVENCY PLAN; ANNUAL FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

(1) the term “Board of Governors” means the Board of Governors of the Postal Service;

(2) the term “long-term solvency plan” means the plan required to be submitted by the Postmaster General under subsection (b)(1); and

(3) the term “solvency” means the ability of the Postal Service to pay debts and meet expenses, including the ability to perform maintenance and repairs, make investments, and maintain financial reserves, as necessary to fulfill the requirements under, and comply with the policies of, title 39, United States Code, and other obligations of the Postal Service.

(b) **PLAN FOR THE LONG-TERM SOLVENCY OF THE POSTAL SERVICE.**—

(1) **SOLVENCY PLAN REQUIRED.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than the date described in subparagraph (B), the Postmaster General shall submit to the Board of Governors a plan describing the actions the Postal Service intends to take to achieve long-term solvency.

(B) **DATE.**—The date described in this subparagraph is the later of—

(i) the date that is 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(ii) the earliest date as of which the Board of Governors has the number of members required for a quorum.

(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—The long-term solvency plan shall take into account—

(A) the legal authority of the Postal Service;

(B) changes in the legal authority and responsibilities of the Postal Service under this title and the amendments made by this title;

(C) projected changes in mail volume;

(D) the impact of any regulations that the Postal Service is required to promulgate under Federal law;

(E) projected changes in the number of employees needed to carry out the responsibilities of the Postal Service;

(F) the long-term capital needs of the Postal Service, including the need to maintain, repair, and replace facilities and equipment; and

(G) the distinctions between market-dominant and competitive products.

(3) **REVIEW AND SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS AND COMMISSION.**—

(A) **REVIEW.**—Upon receipt of the long-term solvency plan, the Board of Governors shall review the long-term solvency plan and may request that the Postmaster General make changes to the long-term solvency plan.

(B) **SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS AND COMMISSION.**—Not later than 60 days after initial receipt of the long-term solvency plan, the Board of Governors shall provide a copy of the long-term solvency plan, together with a letter indicating whether and in what respects the Board of Governors agrees or disagrees with the measures set out in the long-term solvency plan, to—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(ii) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives; and

(iii) the Commission.

(4) **UPDATES.**—

(A) **ANNUAL UPDATES REQUIRED.**—The Postmaster General shall update and submit to the Board of Governors the long-term solvency plan not less frequently than annually for 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) **REVIEW BY BOARD OF GOVERNORS.**—The Board of Governors shall review and submit to Congress and the Commission the updates under this paragraph in accordance with paragraph (3).

(c) **ANNUAL FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For each of the first 5 full fiscal years after the date of enactment of this Act, not later than August 1 of the preceding fiscal year, the Postmaster General shall submit to the Board of Governors a financial plan and budget for the fiscal year that is consistent with the goal of achieving the long-term solvency of the Postal Service.

(2) **CONTENTS OF FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET.**—The financial plan and budget for a fiscal year shall—

(A) promote the financial stability of the Postal Service and provide for progress towards the long-term solvency of the Postal Service;

(B) include the annual budget program of the Postal Service under section 2009 of title 39, United States Code, and the plan of the Postal Service commonly referred to as the “Integrated Financial Plan”; and

(C) describe lump-sum expenditures by all categories traditionally used by the Postal Service;

(D) describe capital expenditures, together with a schedule of projected capital commitments and cash outlays of the Postal Service, and proposed sources of funding;

(E) contain estimates of overall debt (both outstanding and expected to be incurred);

(F) contain cash flow and liquidity forecasts for the Postal Service at such intervals as the Board of Governors may require;

(G) include a statement describing methods of estimations and significant assumptions;

(H) distinguish between market-dominant and competitive products, as practicable; and

(I) address any other issues that the Board of Governors considers appropriate.

(3) **PROCESS FOR SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET.**—

(A) **DEFINITION.**—In this paragraph, the term “covered recipient” means—

- (i) the Postmaster General;
- (ii) the President;
- (iii) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and
- (iv) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

(B) **REVIEW BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Upon receipt of a financial plan and budget under paragraph (1), the Board of Governors shall promptly review the financial plan and budget.

(ii) **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**—In conducting the review under this subparagraph, the Board of Governors may request any additional information it considers necessary and appropriate to carry out the duties of the Board of Governors.

(C) **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET SUBMITTED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL.**—If the Board of Governors determines that the financial plan and budget for a fiscal year received under paragraph (1) meets the requirements under paragraph (2) and otherwise adequately addresses the financial situation of the Postal Service—

(i) the Board of Governors shall approve the financial plan and budget and submit a notice of approval to each covered recipient; and

(ii) the Postmaster General shall submit the annual budget program for the relevant fiscal year to the Office of Management and Budget in accordance with section 2009 of title 39, United States Code.

(D) **DISAPPROVAL OF FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET SUBMITTED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—If the Board of Governors determines that the financial plan and budget for a fiscal year under paragraph (1) does not meet the requirements under paragraph (2) or is otherwise inadequate in addressing the financial situation of the Postal Service, the Board of Governors shall—

(I) disapprove the financial plan and budget;

(II) submit to each covered recipient a statement that describes the reasons for the disapproval;

(III) direct the Postmaster General to appropriately revise the financial plan and budget for the Postal Service; and

(IV) submit the revised financial plan and budget to each covered recipient.

(ii) **SUBMISSION TO OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.**—Upon receipt of a revised financial plan and budget under clause (i)(IV), the Postmaster General shall submit the annual budget program for the relevant fiscal year to the Office of Management and Budget in accordance with section 2009 of title 39, United States Code.

(E) **DEADLINE FOR TRANSMISSION OF FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET BY BOARD OF GOVERNORS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this paragraph, not later than September 30 of the fiscal year that precedes each fiscal year for which a financial plan and budget is required under paragraph (1), the Board of Governors shall submit to each covered recipient—

(i) a notice of approval under subparagraph (C)(i); or

(ii) an approved financial plan and budget for the fiscal year under subparagraph (D)(i)(IV).

(F) **REVISIONS TO FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET.**—

(i) **PERMITTING POSTMASTER GENERAL TO SUBMIT REVISIONS.**—The Postmaster General may submit proposed revisions to the financial plan and budget for a fiscal year to the Board of Governors at any time during that fiscal year.

(ii) **PROCESS FOR REVIEW, APPROVAL, DISAPPROVAL, AND POSTMASTER GENERAL ACTION.**—The procedures described in subparagraphs (B) through (E) shall apply with respect to a proposed revision to a financial plan and budget in the same manner as such procedures apply with respect to the original financial plan and budget.

(d) **ASSUMPTIONS BASED ON CURRENT LAW.**—In preparing the long-term solvency plan or an annual financial plan and budget required under this section, the Postal Service shall base estimates of revenues and expenditures on Federal law as in effect at the time of the preparation of the long-term solvency plan or the financial plan and budget.

(e) **THIRD-PARTY ANALYSIS OF POSTAL SERVICE FINANCES.**—The Commission shall enter into a contract with 1 or more independent third parties under which the third party or parties, in not less than 2 years, shall—

(1) complete a study that analyzes—

(A) the finances of the Postal Service;

(B) the finances of, and business trends in, the overall mailing industry;

(C) the demand for market-dominant and competitive products and services in rural, urban, and suburban communities; and

(D) revenue changes and cost savings of the Postal Service attributable to recent—

(i) closings and consolidations of processing plants, post offices, and other facilities;

(ii) changes to service standards; and

(iii) service performance; and

(2) submit to the Commission a report on the study conducted under paragraph (1) that includes recommendations on affordable options and timetables for improving postal operations and services, including—

(A) how rural service measurement can be made more accurate to ensure that the Postal Service comprehensively measures the mail service provided to each region of the United States, regardless of population size and geographic location;

(B) the feasibility of restoring overnight service standards for market-dominant products similar to the service standards that were in effect on July 1, 2012, including an examination of the resources needed, structural and operational changes needed, and market demand for such a change; and

(C) recommended definitions for the terms “rural” and “urban” for purposes of measuring the performance of the Postal Service relative to service standards under section 3691 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by section 950 of this title.

SEC. 951. SERVICE STANDARDS, PERFORMANCE TARGETS, AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS.

(a) **SERVICE STANDARDS, PERFORMANCE TARGETS, AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3691 of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§3691. Modern service standards, performance targets, and performance measurements

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the terms ‘Area’ and ‘District’ mean the administrative field units established

and given those designations by the Postal Service;

“(2) the term ‘Commission’ means the Postal Regulatory Commission;

“(3) the term ‘performance targets’ means the targets established by the Postal Service under subsection (e)(1)(A);

“(4) the terms ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ have the meanings given those terms under regulations promulgated by the Commission under subsection (e)(2)(A); and

“(5) the term ‘service standards’ means the service standards established by the Postal Service under subsection (b).

“(b) **AUTHORITY GENERALLY.**—

“(1) **ESTABLISHMENT; REVISION.**—The Postal Service shall by regulation establish (and may from time to time thereafter by regulation revise) a set of service standards for market-dominant products based on—

“(A) the finances of the Postal Service;

“(B) the ability of the Postal Service to meet the service standards; and

“(C) the ability of Postal Service customers to receive fair and reliable service.

“(2) **NOTICE TO CONGRESS.**—On the date on which the Postal Service requests an advisory opinion under section 3661 with respect to any regulation promulgated or revised under paragraph (1), the Postal Service shall notify Congress of the request and the proposed regulation or revision of a regulation.

“(c) **OBJECTIVES.**—The service standards shall be designed to achieve the following objectives:

“(1) To ensure that the Postal Service meets the universal service obligation, including the obligation to preserve regular and effective access to postal services in all communities, including those in rural areas or where post offices are not self-sustaining.

“(2) To enhance the value of postal services to both senders and recipients.

“(3) To assure Postal Service customers delivery reliability, speed, and frequency consistent with reasonable rates and best business practices.

“(4) To provide a system of objective performance measurements for each market-dominant product as a basis for measurement of Postal Service performance, in accordance with subsection (e).

“(d) **FACTORS.**—In establishing or revising the service standards, the Postal Service shall take into account—

“(1) the actual level of service that Postal Service customers receive under any service guidelines previously established by the Postal Service or service standards established under this section;

“(2) the degree of customer satisfaction with Postal Service performance in the acceptance, processing, and delivery of mail;

“(3) the needs of all Postal Service customers;

“(4) mail volume and revenues projected for future years;

“(5) the projected growth in the number of addresses the Postal Service will be required to serve in future years;

“(6) the current and projected future cost of serving Postal Service customers;

“(7) the effect of changes in technology, demographics, and population distribution on the efficient and reliable operation of the postal delivery system;

“(8) the financial status of the Postal Service, including the status of any accrued unfunded liabilities or obligations;

“(9) ensuring that the performance of the Postal Service is as strong as reasonably possible under the applicable circumstances, including the factors described in paragraphs (1) through (8); and

“(10) the policies of this title and such other factors as the Postal Service determines appropriate.

“(e) PERFORMANCE TARGETS, MEASUREMENTS, AND PUBLICATION.—

“(1) PERFORMANCE TARGETS.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Each year, the Postal Service shall establish reasonable targets for performance to ensure that mail service for postal customers meets the service standards for market-dominant products.

“(B) COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION.—For purposes of section 3653(b)(2), the Commission shall evaluate the compliance of the Postal Service with the service standards for market-dominant products by reference to the performance targets.

“(2) PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT.—

“(A) DEFINITIONS OF URBAN AND RURAL.—For purposes of measuring performance under the performance targets, the Commission, in consultation with the Postal Service—

“(i) shall promulgate regulations defining the terms—

“(I) rural; and

“(II) urban, which shall be defined by the Commission as any geographic area that is not defined as rural under subclause (I); and

“(ii) in defining the terms under clause (i), shall consider—

“(I) the recommendations of the report submitted to the Commission under section 950(e) of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018;

“(II) existing definitions of those terms that are in use by the Postal Service, the Federal Government, and other sources; and

“(III) stakeholder input.

“(B) PERFORMANCE REPORTING.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Postal Service shall measure and report to the Commission on the performance of the Postal Service with respect to market-dominant products on a nationwide, Area, and District basis based on the performance targets, taking into consideration the Commission's opinion on any proposed target, and in a manner that reflects separate consideration of performance with respect to—

“(I) rural customers; and

“(II) urban customers.

“(ii) COMMISSION REVIEW.—The Commission shall review and comment upon the performance of the Postal Service as reported under clause (i).

“(3) PUBLICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Postal Service shall publish on the website of the Postal Service the performance targets, the actual measurements under those targets, and the comments of the Commission under paragraph (2)—

“(i) covering a period designated by the Commission, the length of which shall be not less than 2 years; and

“(ii) categorized in accordance with that paragraph.

“(B) COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE OR PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—To the extent that the Postal Service considers any information required to be reported under subparagraph (A) to be commercially sensitive or proprietary in nature, the Commission shall determine the level of information that shall be publicly disclosed in accordance with section 504(g)(3)(A).

“(f) REVIEW UPON COMPLAINT.—The regulations promulgated pursuant to this section (and any revisions thereto), and any violations thereof, shall be subject to review upon complaint under sections 3662 and 3663.

“(g) NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PERFORMANCE TARGETS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Postal Service fails to meet 1 or more performance targets—

“(A) subject to subparagraph (B), the Postal Service shall develop a plan to make specific operational corrections under the control of the Postal Service that will cause the

performance targets to be met as soon as is reasonably practicable, as determined by the Postal Service; and

“(B) if the Postal Service makes best efforts to develop a plan described in subparagraph (A) and determines that achieving compliance with the performance targets through such a plan would be impractical, would not be cost effective, and would not be in the best long-term interest of the Postal Service and its customers, the Postal Service shall make adjustments to the service standards or performance targets.

“(2) POSTAL SERVICE SUBMISSION OF PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of non-compliance with a performance target, the Postal Service shall submit to the Commission—

“(A) the plan required under paragraph (1)(A); or

“(B) a report explaining why the Postal Service is making an adjustment described in paragraph (1)(B).

“(3) COMMISSION CONSIDERATION OF POSTAL SERVICE PLAN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission—

“(i) shall review each plan or report submitted by the Postal Service under paragraph (2); and

“(ii) may make such recommendations as the Commission considers appropriate.

“(B) POSTAL SERVICE RESPONSE.—If the Commission provides recommendations regarding a plan or report to the Postal Service under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Postal Service shall—

“(i) consider the recommendations; and

“(ii) not later than 90 days after the date on which the Postal Service receives the recommendations, submit a response to the Commission explaining the bases for any decision to accept or reject a recommendation.

“(4) POSTAL SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN.—After developing a plan under paragraph (1)(A), the Postal Service shall—

“(A) implement the plan; and

“(B) in each report provided under section 3652, discuss—

“(i) the implementation of the plan;

“(ii) the extent to which the Postal Service is improving performance to meet the performance targets; and

“(iii) if the performance targets subject to the plan are still not being met, whether—

“(I) the plan remains sufficient to achieve compliance within a reasonably practicable period of time, and is therefore being maintained;

“(II) the plan is being revised; or

“(III) the Postal Service has determined to make adjustments described in paragraph (1)(B) rather than continue with the plan.

“(5) COMMISSION REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In making the determination required under section 3653, the Commission shall—

“(i) review the implementation of each plan developed under paragraph (1)(A); and

“(ii) make such recommendations as the Commission considers appropriate.

“(B) CONSIDERATION.—The Postal Service shall consider any recommendations under subparagraph (A)(ii) in the same manner as provided under paragraph (3).

“(h) PERIODIC REVIEW OF SERVICE STANDARDS.—The Commission shall periodically—

“(1) review the appropriateness of the service standards; and

“(2) submit to Congress and the Postal Service a report on the review conducted under paragraph (1).”.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 36 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 3691 and inserting the following:

“3691. Modern service standards, performance targets, and performance measurements.”.

(b) REVIEW OF NATIONWIDE SERVICE STANDARDS CHANGES.—Section 3661 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by section 945 of this title, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) CHANGES RELATING TO MARKET-DOMINANT PRODUCTS.—

“(1) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—Upon a request by the Postal Service for an advisory opinion from the Commission under subsection (b) relating to a nationwide or substantially nationwide change in service standards for the delivery of market-dominant products, including when the Postal Service establishes new performance targets under section 3691(e), the Inspector General shall, not later than 90 days after the submission of the request—

“(A) conduct a review of the proposal to determine whether—

“(i) the Postal Service formulated the proposal based on accurate data;

“(ii) the Postal Service followed appropriate policies and procedures of the Postal Service in formulating the proposal; and

“(iii) the proposal prioritizes the needs of the postal customer; and

“(B) submit a report on the review conducted under subparagraph (A) to—

“(i) the Postal Service;

“(ii) the Commission;

“(iii) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

“(iv) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

“(2) COMMISSION REVIEW.—Not earlier than 30 days after the date on which the Inspector General submits a report on a proposal to the Commission under paragraph (1), the Commission shall issue its opinion on the proposal.”.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the report is submitted to the Commission under section 950(e)(2) of this title, the Commission shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) a determination as to whether the service standards for market-dominant products in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act achieve the objectives and factors set forth under section 3691 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this section; and

(2) recommendations as to how delivery service to postal customers could be improved based on the financial condition of the Postal Service.

(d) TEMPORARY FLOOR FOR SERVICE STANDARDS.—The Postal Service may not revise the service standards for market-dominant products in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act in a manner that lengthens delivery times before the date on which the report is submitted to the Commission under section 950(e)(2) of this title.

SEC. 952. POSTAL SERVICE CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 209. Chief Innovation Officer

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established within the Postal Service the position of Chief Innovation Officer, appointed by the Postmaster General, who shall manage the Postal Service's development and implementation of innovative postal and nonpostal products and services.

“(b) DUTIES.—The primary duties of the Chief Innovation Officer are as follows:

“(1) Leading the development of innovative nonpostal products and services that will maximize revenue to the Postal Service.

“(2) Developing innovative postal products and services, specifically those that utilize emerging information technologies, to maximize revenue to the Postal Service.

“(3) Implementing the innovation strategy described under subsection (d).

“(4) Monitoring the performance of innovative products and services and revising them as needed to meet changing market trends.

“(5) Taking into consideration comments or advisory opinions, if applicable, issued by the Postal Regulatory Commission prior to the initial sale of innovative postal or non-postal products and services.

“(c) APPOINTMENT.—

“(1) DEADLINE.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018, but not later than 6 months after such date, the Postmaster General shall appoint a Chief Innovation Officer.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—Any individual appointed to serve as the Chief Innovation Officer shall have proven expertise and a record of success in at least 1 of the following:

“(A) Postal and shipping industry.

“(B) Innovation product research and development.

“(C) Marketing brand strategy.

“(D) Emerging communications technology.

“(E) Business process management.

“(3) CURRENT OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE ELIGIBLE.—An officer or employee of the Postal Service may be appointed to the position of Chief Innovation Officer under this chapter. Upon appointment to such position, such officer or employee may not concurrently hold any other position in the Postal Service.

“(d) INNOVATION STRATEGY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date on which the Chief Innovation Officer is appointed under subsection (c)(1), the Postmaster General shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Postal Regulatory Commission a comprehensive strategy for maximizing revenues through innovative postal and nonpostal products and services.

“(2) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The strategy submitted under paragraph (1) shall address—

“(A) the specific innovative postal and nonpostal products and services to be developed and offered by the Postal Service, including the nature of the market to be filled by each product and service and the likely date by which each product and service will be introduced;

“(B) the cost of developing and offering each product or service;

“(C) the anticipated sales volume of each product and service;

“(D) the anticipated revenues and profits expected to be generated by each product and service;

“(E) the likelihood of success of each product and service as well as the risks associated with the development and sale of each product and service;

“(F) the trends anticipated in market conditions that may affect the success of each product and service over the 5-year period beginning on the date such strategy or update is submitted;

“(G) the metrics that will be utilized to assess the effectiveness of the innovation strategy; and

“(H) the specific methods by which mailpiece design analysis may be improved to speed the approval process and promote the increased use of innovative mailpiece design.

“(3) STRATEGY UPDATES.—On January 1, 2020, and every 3 years thereafter, the Postal

Service shall submit an update to the innovation strategy submitted under paragraph (1) to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Postal Regulatory Commission.

“(e) REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date of submission of the President's annual budget under section 1105(a) of title 31, the Postmaster General shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Postal Regulatory Commission a report that details the Postal Service's progress in implementing the innovation strategy described under subsection (d).

“(2) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall address—

“(A) the revenue generated by each product and service developed through the innovation strategy and the costs of developing and offering each such product and service for the most recent fiscal year;

“(B) the total sales volume and revenue generated by each product and service on a monthly basis for the preceding year;

“(C) trends in the markets filled by each product and service;

“(D) products and services identified in the innovation strategy that are to be discontinued, the date on which the discontinuance will occur, and the reasons for the discontinuance;

“(E) alterations in products and services identified in the innovation strategy that will be made to meet changing market conditions, and an explanation of how these alterations will ensure the success of the products and services; and

“(F) the performance of the innovation strategy according to the metrics identified in subsection (d)(2)(G).

“(f) COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General shall conduct a study on the implementation of the innovation strategy described under subsection (d) not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The study required under paragraph (1) shall assess the effectiveness of the Postal Service in identifying, developing, and selling innovative postal and nonpostal products and services. The study shall also include—

“(A) an audit of the costs of developing each innovative postal and nonpostal product and service developed or offered by the Postal Service during the period beginning on the date of enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018 and ending 4 years after such date;

“(B) the sales volume of each such product and service;

“(C) the revenues and profits generated by each such product and service; and

“(D) the likelihood of continued success of each such product and service.

“(3) SUBMISSION.—The results of the study required under this subsection shall be submitted to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Postal Regulatory Commission.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 2 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“209. Chief Innovation Officer.”.

SEC. 953. EMERGENCY SUSPENSIONS OF POST OFFICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 404 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) EMERGENCY SUSPENSIONS.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

“(A) the terms ‘alternate service’ and ‘temporary location’ include a location at which customers affected by an emergency suspension of a post office, or the expiration of the lease or rental agreement for a post office, may send and receive mail, which may include the provision and regular servicing of a Cluster Box Unit (commonly known as a ‘CBU’) by the Postal Service;

“(B) the term ‘discontinuance procedures’ means the procedures required for the discontinuance of a post office under subsection (d) and any regulations promulgated under that subsection;

“(C) the term ‘emergency suspension’ means the temporary suspension of retail operations at a post office, without following discontinuance procedures for the post office, because of—

“(i) a natural disaster;

“(ii) the termination of a lease or rental agreement by the lessor;

“(iii) a lack of qualified personnel to operate the post office;

“(iv) severe or irreparable damage to, or destruction of, the post office when alternate quarters acceptable to the Postal Service for use as a post office are not immediately available in the community;

“(v) a challenge to the sanctity of the mail; or

“(vi) a lack of adequate measures to safeguard the post office or its revenues; and

“(D) the term ‘post office’—

“(i) means a Post Office, as that term is defined in section 241.1 of title 39, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation; and

“(ii) includes a post office branch or post office station.

“(2) AUTHORITY.—The Postal Service may implement an emergency suspension of a post office in accordance with the requirements under paragraphs (3) through (7).

“(3) NOTIFICATION.—If the Postal Service implements an emergency suspension of a post office, the Postal Service shall provide immediate notice of the suspension to—

“(A) the relevant local, regional, State, and Federal officials, including—

“(i) each Member of Congress who represents the area in which the affected post office is located; and

“(ii) the chief executive of each relevant unit of local government; and

“(B) customers, notification to whom shall include—

“(i) the effective date of the suspension;

“(ii) the reason for the suspension;

“(iii) any alternate service available;

“(iv) the nearest postal retail facility (as defined in section 903 of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2018) and hours of service; and

“(v) the name and contact information of an individual to contact for more information.

“(4) ALTERNATE SERVICE.—If the Postal Service implements an emergency suspension of a post office, the Postal Service shall provide alternate drop-off, pick-up, and post office box services at 1 or more locations that are as close as feasible to the suspended post office.

“(5) EMPLOYEE REASSIGNMENT.—If the Postal Service implements an emergency suspension of a post office, the Postal Service shall temporarily reassign each employee of the post office in accordance with each applicable Federal statute, Federal regulation, and collective bargaining agreement.

“(6) SUSPENSION REVIEW.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Within a reasonable period of time after the date on which the Postal Service implements an emergency suspension of a post office, the Postal Service shall review the emergency suspension and determine whether to—

“(i) reopen the post office; or

“(ii) continue the emergency suspension.

“(B) REOPENING.—

“(i) NOTIFICATION.—If the Postal Service makes a determination under subparagraph (A) to reopen a post office, the Postal Service shall provide notice to the persons described in paragraph (3) of the date by which the Postal Service expects to reopen the post office.

“(ii) DELAY.—If the Postal Service does not reopen a post office by the date specified under clause (i), not later than the next business day after that date, the Postal Service shall provide notice of the delay to the persons described in paragraph (3), including a new date by which the Postal Service expects to reopen the post office, if such a date is known.

“(iii) SUBSEQUENT DELAYS.—If the Postal Service does not reopen a post office by a new date specified under clause (ii), the Postal Service shall provide to the persons described in paragraph (3) notice, and a new date in the same manner as under clause (ii) of this subparagraph, and shall continue to do so at regular intervals until the Postal Service reopens the post office or initiates discontinuance procedures for the post office.

“(C) CONTINUED SUSPENSION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Postal Service makes a determination under subparagraph (A) to continue the emergency suspension of a post office, the Postal Service—

“(I) not later than 30 days after making the determination, shall—

“(aa) provide alternate services that are the same or substantially similar to the services provided at the suspended post office on a temporary basis at a location within a reasonable distance of the suspended post office, which may be at the nearest postal facility; and

“(bb)(AA) initiate discontinuance procedures for the post office;

“(BB) publish a plan to restore service to the affected community within a reasonable period of time; or

“(CC) provide notice to the persons described in paragraph (3) of the date on which the Postal Service expects to publish a plan to restore the same or substantially similar service to the affected community within a reasonable period of time; and

“(II) if the Postal Service elects to provide notice under subclause (I)(bb)(CC), shall, not later than 90 days after the date of the initial determination to implement the emergency suspension, publish the plan described in that subclause.

“(ii) DELAY IN RESTORATION OF SERVICE.—If the Postal Service publishes a plan to restore service to an affected community under subclause (I)(bb)(BB) or (II) of clause (i) and such service to the affected community is not restored within 180 days of the date on which the emergency suspension was implemented, the Postal Service shall—

“(I)(aa) publish notice of the continued suspension, including—

“(AA) a reason for the delay; and

“(BB) an anticipated date of restoration of service; and

“(bb) not later than 30 days after publishing the notice under item (aa), host a question-and-answer forum—

“(AA) that members of the community may attend, at a location accessible to the affected community; or

“(BB) in which members of the affected community may participate by teleconference or videoconference; or

“(II) initiate discontinuance procedures for the post office.

“(iii) 1-YEAR DELAY.—If, as of the date that is 1 year after the date on which an emergency suspension of a post office was implemented, service to the affected community has not been restored and the Postal Service has not initiated discontinuance procedures for the post office, the Postal Service—

“(I) shall publish notice of the continued suspension, including—

“(aa) a reason for the delay; and

“(bb) an anticipated date of restoration of such service;

“(II) shall host—

“(aa) not later than 30 days after publishing the notice under subclause (I), a second question-and-answer forum described in clause (ii)(I)(bb); and

“(bb) additional question-and-answer fora described in clause (ii)(I)(bb) every subsequent 180 days until—

“(AA) such service is restored; or

“(BB) the Postal Service initiates discontinuance procedures for the post office; and

“(III) if services similar to those that have not been restored are not located within a reasonable distance of the post office, not later than 60 days after the date that is 1 year after the date on which the emergency suspension was implemented, shall develop and publish a plan to provide essential services, including alternate retail and post office box services, on a temporary basis at a location within a reasonable distance of the suspended post office.

“(7) RESTORATION OF SERVICE.—Upon the restoration of service under paragraph (6)(C), the Postal Service shall immediately notify—

“(A) the affected community; and

“(B) the Headquarters Review Coordinator.

“(8) LEASE OR RENTAL AGREEMENT EXPIRATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—

“(i) PROHIBITION ON EMERGENCY SUSPENSIONS.—The Postal Service may not implement an emergency suspension of a post office based on the expiration of the lease or rental agreement for the post office.

“(ii) ALTERNATIVE PROCESS.—The Postal Service shall establish an alternative process for the suspension of postal services to a community based on the expiration of a lease or rental agreement for a post office in accordance with subparagraphs (B) through (G) of this paragraph.

“(B) FAILURE TO REACH AGREEMENT.—If, as of 30 days before the expiration of a lease or rental agreement for a post office, the Postal Service does not expect to reach an agreement with the lessor to extend the lease or rental agreement or to sell the property to the Postal Service, the Postal Service shall—

“(i) notify the affected community of a possible disruption in service due to the possible expiration of the lease or rental agreement; and

“(ii) include in the notification under clause (i)—

“(I) the expiration date of the lease or rental agreement;

“(II) alternate services available if the lease or rental agreement expires;

“(III) the nearest post offices and hours of service; and

“(IV) the name, telephone number, and email address of an individual to contact for more information.

“(C) RESTORATION OF SERVICE.—Not later than 5 days after the date on which a lease or rental agreement for a post office expires, the Postal Service shall make best efforts to commence actions required to restore the

same or substantially similar service to the community in which the post office that was the subject of the expired lease or rental agreement is located.

“(D) FAILURE TO RESTORE SERVICE.—If, within 30 days after the expiration of a lease or rental agreement for a post office, the Postal Service is unable to restore service at the same location or at another location in the affected community, the Postal Service shall publish notice of intent to restore the same or substantially similar service to the affected community—

“(i) within a reasonable period of time; and

“(ii) in any event, not later than 180 days after the date on which the lease or rental agreement expired.

“(E) DELAY IN RESTORATION OF SERVICE.—If the Postal Service publishes notice of intent to restore the same or substantially similar service to an affected community under subparagraph (D) and such service to the affected community is not restored within 180 days of the date on which the lease or rental agreement for the post office expired, the Postal Service shall—

“(i) publish notice of the delay, including—

“(I) a reason for the delay; and

“(II) an anticipated date of restoration of such service; and

“(ii) within a reasonable period of time after publishing the notice under clause (i), host a question-and-answer forum—

“(I) that members of the community may attend, at a location accessible to the affected community; or

“(II) in which members of the affected community may participate by teleconference or videoconference.

“(F) FURTHER DELAYS IN RESTORATION OF SERVICE.—Upon the expiration of each 30-day period after the date on which the Postal Service publishes notice of a delay under subparagraph (E)(i), if the same or substantially similar service to the affected community has not been restored, the Postal Service shall publish an updated notice of the delay that includes the anticipated date of restoration of such service.

“(G) 1-YEAR DELAY.—If the same or substantially similar service to the affected community is not restored within 1 year of the date on which the lease or rental agreement for the post office expired, the Postal Service—

“(i) shall host—

“(I) a second question-and-answer forum described in subparagraph (E)(ii); and

“(II) additional question-and-answer fora described in subparagraph (E)(ii) in the affected community as determined necessary by the Postal Service until—

“(aa) such service is restored; or

“(bb) the Postal Service initiates discontinuance procedures for the post office; and

“(ii) if no alternate services are located within a reasonable distance of the post office, not later than 60 days after the date that is 1 year after the date on which the lease or rental agreement for the post office expired, shall develop and publish a plan to provide essential services, including alternate retail and post office box services, on a temporary basis at a location within a reasonable distance of the post office.”

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to any emergency suspension of a post office that is implemented on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 954. MAILING ADDRESS REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VI of chapter 36 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 3687. Mailing address requirements

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘municipality’ means a city, town, borough, county, parish, district, association, or other public entity established by, or pursuant to, applicable State law; and

“(2) the term ‘State’ means each of the several States, territories, and possessions of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

“(b) REQUIREMENT FOR PHYSICAL AND MAILING ADDRESSES TO CORRESPOND.—The State and municipality used by the Postal Service for the delivery address for purposes of mail matter shall correspond with the State and municipality of the physical address of the location for the delivery of such mail matter.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 36 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3686 the following:

“3687. Mailing address requirements.”.

Subtitle C—Postal Contracting Reform **SEC. 961. CONTRACTING PROVISIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part I of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“CHAPTER 7—CONTRACTING PROVISIONS

“Sec.

“701. Definitions.

“702. Delegation of contracting authority.

“703. Posting of noncompetitive purchase requests for noncompetitive contracts.

“704. Review of ethical issues.

“705. Ethical restrictions on participation in certain contracting activity.

“§ 701. Definitions

“In this chapter—

“(1) the term ‘contracting officer’ means an employee of a covered postal entity who has authority to enter into a postal contract;

“(2) the term ‘covered postal entity’ means—

“(A) the Postal Service; or

“(B) the Postal Regulatory Commission;

“(3) the term ‘head of a covered postal entity’ means—

“(A) in the case of the Postal Service, the Postmaster General; or

“(B) in the case of the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission;

“(4) the term ‘postal contract’ means—

“(A) in the case of the Postal Service, any contract (including any agreement or memorandum of understanding) entered into by the Postal Service for the procurement of goods or services; or

“(B) in the case of the Postal Regulatory Commission, any contract (including any agreement or memorandum of understanding) in an amount exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold (as defined in section 134 of title 41) entered into by the Postal Regulatory Commission for the procurement of goods or services; and

“(5) the term ‘senior procurement executive’ means the senior procurement executive of a covered postal entity.

“§ 702. Delegation of contracting authority

“(a) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) POLICY.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this chapter, the head of each covered postal entity shall issue a policy on contracting officer delegations of authority for postal contracts for the covered postal entity.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The policy issued under paragraph (1) shall require that—

“(A) notwithstanding any delegation of authority with respect to postal contracts, the ultimate responsibility and accountability for the award and administration of postal contracts resides with the senior procurement executive; and

“(B) a contracting officer shall maintain an awareness of, and engagement in, the activities being performed on postal contracts of which that officer has cognizance, notwithstanding any delegation of authority that may have been executed.

“(b) POSTING OF DELEGATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of each covered postal entity shall make any delegation of authority for postal contracts outside the functional contracting unit readily available and accessible on the website of the covered postal entity.

“(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This paragraph shall apply to any delegation of authority made on or after the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment of this chapter.

“§ 703. Posting of noncompetitive purchase requests for noncompetitive contracts

“(a) POSTING REQUIRED.—

“(1) POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION.—The Postal Regulatory Commission shall make the noncompetitive purchase request for any noncompetitive award for any contract (including any agreement or memorandum of understanding) entered into by the Postal Regulatory Commission for the procurement of goods and services in an amount of \$20,000 or more, including the rationale supporting the noncompetitive award, publicly available on the website of the Postal Regulatory Commission—

“(A) not later than 14 days after the date of the award of the noncompetitive contract; or

“(B) not later than 30 days after the date of the award of the noncompetitive contract, if the basis for the award was a compelling business interest.

“(2) POSTAL SERVICE.—The Postal Service shall make the noncompetitive purchase request for any noncompetitive award of a postal contract in an amount of \$250,000 or more, including the rationale supporting the noncompetitive award, publicly available on the website of the Postal Service—

“(A) not later than 14 days after the date of the award; or

“(B) not later than 30 days after the date of the award, if the basis for the award was a compelling business interest.

“(3) ADJUSTMENTS TO THE POSTING THRESHOLD.—

“(A) REVIEW AND DETERMINATION.—Not later than January 31 of each year, the Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission shall—

“(i) review the applicable threshold established under paragraph (1) or (2); and

“(ii) based on any change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers of the Department of Labor, determine whether an adjustment to the threshold shall be made.

“(B) AMOUNT OF ADJUSTMENTS.—An adjustment under subparagraph (A) shall be made in increments of \$5,000. If the covered postal entity determines that a change in the Consumer Price Index for a year would require an adjustment in an amount that is less than \$5,000, the covered postal entity may not make an adjustment to the threshold for the year.

“(4) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This subsection shall apply to any noncompetitive contract awarded on or after the date that is 90 days after the date of enactment of this chapter.

“(b) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the information required to be made publicly available by a covered postal entity under subsection (a) shall be readily accessible on the website of the covered postal entity.

“(2) PROTECTION OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—A covered postal entity shall—

“(A) carefully screen any description of the rationale supporting a noncompetitive award required to be made publicly available under

subsection (a) to determine whether the description includes proprietary data (including any reference or citation to the proprietary data) or security-related information; and

“(B) remove any proprietary data or security-related information before making publicly available a description of the rationale supporting a noncompetitive award.

“(c) WAIVERS.—

“(1) WAIVER PERMITTED.—If the Postal Service determines that making a noncompetitive purchase request for a postal contract of the Postal Service under subsection (a)(2) publicly available would risk placing the Postal Service at a competitive disadvantage relative to a private sector competitor, the senior procurement executive, in consultation with the advocate for competition of the Postal Service, may waive the requirements under subsection (a).

“(2) FORM AND CONTENT OF WAIVER.—

“(A) FORM.—A waiver under paragraph (1) shall be in the form of a written determination placed in the file of the contract to which the noncompetitive purchase request relates.

“(B) CONTENT.—A waiver under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(i) a description of the risk associated with making the noncompetitive purchase request publicly available; and

“(ii) a statement that redaction of sensitive information in the noncompetitive purchase request would not be sufficient to protect the Postal Service from being placed at a competitive disadvantage relative to a private sector competitor.

“(3) DELEGATION OF WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Postal Service may not delegate the authority to approve a waiver under paragraph (1) to any employee having less authority than the senior procurement executive.

“§ 704. Review of ethical issues

“If a contracting officer identifies any ethical issues relating to a proposed contract and submits those issues and that proposed contract to the designated ethics official for the covered postal entity before the awarding of that contract, that ethics official shall—

“(1) review the proposed contract; and

“(2) advise the contracting officer on the appropriate resolution of ethical issues.

“§ 705. Ethical restrictions on participation in certain contracting activity

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘covered employee’ means—

“(A) a contracting officer; or

“(B) any employee of a covered postal entity whose decisionmaking affects a postal contract as determined by regulations prescribed by the head of a covered postal entity;

“(2) the term ‘final conviction’ means a conviction entered by a court, regardless of whether such conviction was entered on a verdict or pursuant to a plea (including a plea of nolo contendere), and with regard to which no further appeal may be taken or is pending; and

“(3) the term ‘covered relationship’ means a covered relationship described in section 2635.502(b)(1) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto.

“(b) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) REGULATIONS.—The head of each covered postal entity shall prescribe regulations that—

“(A) require a covered employee to include in the file of any noncompetitive purchase request for a noncompetitive postal contract a written certification that—

“(i) discloses any covered relationship of the covered employee; and

“(i) states that the covered employee will not take any action with respect to the non-competitive purchase request that affects the financial interests of any person with which the covered employee has a covered relationship, or otherwise gives rise to an appearance of the use of public office for private gain, as described in section 2635.702 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto;

“(B) require a contracting officer to consult with the ethics counsel for the covered postal entity regarding any disclosure made by a covered employee under subparagraph (A)(i), to determine whether participation by the covered employee in the noncompetitive purchase request would give rise to a violation of part 2635 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (commonly referred to as the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch), or any successor thereto;

“(C) require the ethics counsel for a covered postal entity to review any disclosure made by a contracting officer under subparagraph (A)(i) to determine whether participation by the contracting officer in the non-competitive purchase request would give rise to a violation of part 2635 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (commonly referred to as the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch), or any successor thereto;

“(D) under subsections (d) and (e) of section 2635.502 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto, require the ethics counsel for a covered postal entity to—

“(i) authorize a covered employee that makes a disclosure under subparagraph (A)(i) to participate in the noncompetitive postal contract; or

“(ii) disqualify a covered employee that makes a disclosure under subparagraph (A)(i) from participating in the noncompetitive postal contract;

“(E) require a contractor to timely disclose to the contracting officer in a bid, solicitation, award, or performance of a postal contract any conflict of interest with a covered employee; and

“(F) include authority for the head of the covered postal entity to grant a waiver or otherwise mitigate any organizational or personal conflict of interest, if the head of the covered postal entity determines that the waiver or mitigation is in the best interests of the covered postal entity.

“(2) POSTING OF WAIVERS.—Not later than 30 days after the head of a covered postal entity grants a waiver described in paragraph (1)(F), the head of the covered postal entity shall make the waiver publicly available on the website of the covered postal entity.

“(c) CONTRACT VOIDANCE AND RECOVERY.—

“(1) UNLAWFUL CONDUCT.—In any case in which there is a final conviction for a violation of any provision of chapter 11 of title 18 relating to a postal contract, the head of a covered postal entity may—

“(A) void that contract; and

“(B) recover the amounts expended and property transferred by the covered postal entity under that contract.

“(2) OBTAINING OR DISCLOSING PROCUREMENT INFORMATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which a contractor under a postal contract fails to timely disclose a conflict of interest to the appropriate contracting officer as required under the regulations promulgated under subsection (b)(1)(E), the head of a covered postal entity may—

“(i) void that contract; and

“(ii) recover the amounts expended and property transferred by the covered postal entity under that contract.

“(B) CONVICTION OR ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATION.—A case described under subparagraph (A) is any case in which—

“(i) there is a final conviction for an offense punishable under section 2105 of title 41; or

“(ii) the head of a covered postal entity determines, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that the contractor or someone acting for the contractor has engaged in conduct constituting an offense punishable under section 2105 of such title.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters at the beginning of part I is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“7. Contracting Provisions 701”.
SEC. 962. TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION.**

Section 7101(8) of title 41, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (C);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (D) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission.”.

**Subtitle D—Postal Regulatory Commission,
Inspector General, Related Provisions, and
Miscellaneous**

SEC. 981. POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION.

Section 502 of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by striking “subsection (f)” and inserting “subsections (f) and (g)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(g) A Commissioner may serve for not more than 2 full terms as a Commissioner.”.

SEC. 982. INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE AND THE POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION.

(a) APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE AND THE POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION BY PRESIDENT.—Section 8G of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “the United States International Trade Commission, the Postal Regulatory Commission, and the United States Postal Service” and inserting “the United States International Trade Commission, and the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission”; and

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

“(B) with respect to the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission, such term, for purposes of oversight of—

“(i) the United States Postal Service, means the Governors (as defined in section 102(3) of title 39, United States Code); and

“(ii) the Postal Regulatory Commission, means the Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission;”;

(2) in subsection (d)(1), by inserting “or subsection (f)(3)” after “Except as provided in paragraph (2)”; and

(3) in subsection (f)—

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

“(1)(A) There is established in the United States Postal Service the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission.

“(B) There shall be at the head of the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission an Inspector General (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Inspector General’) who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and con-

sent of the Senate, without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, management analysis, public administration, or investigations.

“(C) The Inspector General may be removed from office by the President. If the Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within the United States Postal Service, the President shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress, not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer. Nothing in this subparagraph shall prohibit a personnel action otherwise authorized by law, other than transfer or removal.

“(D) For the purposes of section 7324 of title 5, United States Code, the Inspector General shall not be considered to be an employee who determines policies to be pursued by the United States in the nationwide administration of Federal laws.

“(E) The Inspector General shall have all of the authorities and responsibilities provided by this Act with respect to the Postal Regulatory Commission, as if the Postal Regulatory Commission were part of the United States Postal Service.”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “of the United States Postal Service (hereinafter in this subsection referred to as the ‘Inspector General’)”;

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (i), in the matter preceding subclause (I), by inserting “relating to the United States Postal Service” before “which require access to sensitive information”; and

(II) in clause (iii), by striking “Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate” and inserting “Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate”;

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(i), by inserting “and the Postal Regulatory Commission” after “United States Postal Service”; and

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking “Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate” and inserting “Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate”;

(D) in paragraph (4), by adding at the end the following: “Nothing in this paragraph may be invoked by the United States Postal Service to restrict or limit any audit or investigation that the Inspector General considers appropriate.”; and

(E) in paragraph (6), by inserting “and the Postal Regulatory Commission” after “United States Postal Service”.

(b) INTERIM POWER OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE.—During the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which the first individual is appointed as Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service shall have all of the authorities and responsibilities provided by the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) with respect to the Postal Regulatory Commission on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, as if the Postal Regulatory Commission were part of the United States Postal Service.

(c) TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL.—

(1) OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE.—The personnel employed in the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service are transferred to the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission.

(2) OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION.—The

personnel employed in the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Regulatory Commission may be transferred to the other offices of the Postal Regulatory Commission.

(3) **MODERN SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.**—Any unobligated amounts made available to carry out the functions of the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Regulatory Commission before the date of enactment of this Act shall be used to establish and revise modern service standards and measure performance under section 3691 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by section 950(a) of this title.

(4) **EFFECT.**—During the 1-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, any full-time or part-time employee who, on the day before such date of enactment, was employed in a permanent position in the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Regulatory Commission, shall not be separated or reduced in grade or compensation because of the transfer under an amendment made by this section.

(d) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **TITLE 39, UNITED STATES CODE.**—Title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in section 102(4), by striking “section 202(e) of this title” and inserting “section 8G(f)(1)(B) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)”;

(B) in section 202, by striking subsection (e);

(C) in section 504, by striking subsection (h);

(D) in section 1001(b), in the first sentence, by inserting “, and section 8G(f)(1)(B) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)” after “1001(c) of this title”;

(E) in section 1003(b), by striking “11(2)” and inserting “12(2)”;

(F) in section 1005(a)(3), by inserting “, and section 8G(f)(1)(B) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)” after “1001(c) of this title”;

(G) in section 2009, by inserting “and the Postal Regulatory Commission” after “United States Postal Service”; and

(H) in section 2011(h)(2)(D), by inserting “and the Postal Regulatory Commission” after “United States Postal Service”.

(2) **OMNIBUS CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997.**—Section 662(d) of the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997 (39 U.S.C. 2802 note) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by inserting “AND THE POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION” after “POSTAL SERVICE”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and the Postal Regulatory Commission” after “Postal Service”; and

(iii) in subparagraph (B)(i), by inserting “and the Postal Regulatory Commission” after “Postal Service”; and

(B) in the first sentence of paragraph (2), by inserting “and the Postal Regulatory Commission” after “Postal Service”.

(e) **SAVINGS PROVISIONS.**—

(1) **SUITS.**—The provisions of this title shall not affect suits commenced before the effective date of this title, and in all such suits, proceeding shall be had, appeals taken, and judgments rendered in the same manner and with the same effect as if this title had not been enacted.

(2) **NONABATEMENT OF ACTIONS.**—No suit, action, or other proceeding commenced by or against the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service or the Inspector General of the Postal Regulatory Commission, or by or against any individual in the official capacity of such individual as an officer of the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service or the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Regu-

latory Commission shall abate by reason of the enactment of this title.

(3) **CONTINUANCE OF SUITS.**—If, before the effective date of this title, the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service or the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Regulatory Commission or officer thereof in the official capacity of such officer, is party to a suit, and under this title any function of the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service or the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Regulatory Commission or officer is transferred to the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission or any other official of the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission, then such suit shall be continued with the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission or other appropriate official of the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission substituted or added as a party.

(f) **APPLICABILITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except with respect to the amendment made by subsection (a)(1)(A) relating to the Postal Regulatory Commission and the amendment made by subsection (d)(1)(C), the amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to the first individual appointed as Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this title may be construed to alter the authority or the length of the term of the individual serving as Inspector General of the United States Postal Service on the date of enactment of this Act.

(g) **REFERENCES IN THIS TITLE TO THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE.**—On and after the date on which the first individual is appointed as Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission after the date of enactment of this Act, each reference in this title to the Inspector General of the Postal Service shall be deemed to be a reference to the Inspector General of the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission.

(h) **RESOURCES FOR WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE INVESTIGATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 4 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§417. Waste, fraud, and abuse investigations

“The Postal Service may transfer such resources to the Inspector General for waste, fraud, and abuse investigations as the Postal Service determines necessary.”.

(2) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections for chapter 4 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“417. Waste, fraud, and abuse investigations.”.

SEC. 983. GAO REPORT ON FRAGMENTATION, OVERLAP, AND DUPLICATION IN FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall include in the annual report to Congress required under section 21 of the Joint Resolution entitled “Joint Resolution increasing the statutory limit on the public debt”, approved February 12, 2010 (31 U.S.C. 712 note), that is applicable to the first year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act a review of the duplication of services and functions between the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Service, the Postal Inspection Service, and any other Federal agency.

SA 3464. Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WARNER, Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. ____. In addition to amounts made available for the Election Assistance Commission, \$250,000,000 shall be made available for election security grants: *Provided*, That, of the unobligated balances available under the heading “Treasury Forfeiture Fund”, \$380,000,000 are hereby permanently rescinded not later than September 30, 2019.

SA 3465. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) The Secretary of Agriculture may provide debt forgiveness to an Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)) for a direct loan provided under the Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant program under subpart A of part 1942 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), if—

(1) the Indian tribe is designated as a Promise Zone under the Promise Zones Initiative; and

(2) the land of the Indian tribe is partly or wholly located in an area designated as a qualified opportunity zone under subchapter Z of chapter 1 of subtitle A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(b) Nothing in this section adversely affects the ability of an Indian tribe that receives debt forgiveness under subsection (a) to apply for or receive any other Federal loan.

SA 3466. Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) In this section—

(1) the term “covered State” means a State that administers a crumbling foundations assistance fund;

(2) the term “crumbling foundations assistance fund” means a fund established by a State the purpose of which is to receive public or private contributions to provide financial assistance to owners of residential buildings in the State to repair or replace the concrete foundations of those residential buildings that have deteriorated due to the presence of pyrrhotite;

(3) the term “residential building” means a 1-family, 2-family, 3-family or 4-family

dwelling, including a condominium unit or dwelling in a planned unit development; and

(4) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

(b) Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish and implement a program to make grants to covered States to assist owners of residential buildings with concrete foundations that have deteriorated due to the presence of pyrrhotite.

(c) A covered State desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(d) A covered State receiving a grant under this section shall deposit any grant amounts into the crumbling foundations assistance fund of the State for the purpose of carrying out the activities described in subsection (e).

(e) A covered State receiving a grant under this section shall—

(1) develop a single, unified application for owners of residential buildings to apply for all financial assistance from the crumbling foundations assistance fund of the covered State;

(2) provide financial assistance to approved owners of residential buildings for the repair or replacement of concrete foundations that have deteriorated due to the presence of pyrrhotite, including financial reimbursement to owners who have had such repair or replacement performed before the date of enactment of this Act;

(3) assist approved owners of residential buildings to obtain additional financing necessary to fully fund the repair or replacement of concrete foundations that have deteriorated due to the presence of pyrrhotite;

(4) approve contractors or other vendors for eligibility to perform foundation repairs or replacements on behalf of approved owners;

(5) ensure that the financial assistance is used solely for costs of repairing and replacing concrete foundations that have deteriorated due to the presence of pyrrhotite; and

(6) require the disclosure of the amount of all financial compensation received by an owner of the residential building, if any, arising out of a claim for coverage under the property coverage provisions of the homeowners policy for foundation deterioration due to the presence of pyrrhotite and ensure that the amount is considered when determining the amount of financial assistance offered to the owner.

(f)(1) Each grant awarded to a covered State under this section in a fiscal year shall be in an amount of not more than \$20,000,000.

(2) A grant awarded under this section shall be for a period of 5 years.

(g) The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives an annual report on the grant program established under this section, including a summary of the use of funds by covered States receiving a grant under this section.

SA 3467. Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “SALARIES AND EXPENSES” under the heading “DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES” under the heading “DE-

PARTMENT OF THE TREASURY” in title I of division B, strike paragraphs (2) and (3) and insert the following:

(2) not to exceed \$258,000 is for unforeseen emergencies of a confidential nature to be allocated and expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury and to be accounted for solely on the Secretary’s certificate;

(3) not to exceed \$24,000,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2020, for—

(A) the Treasury-wide Financial Statement Audit and Internal Control Program;

(B) information technology modernization requirements;

(C) the audit, oversight, and administration of the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund;

(D) the development and implementation of programs within the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Compliance Policy, including entering into cooperative agreements;

(E) operations and maintenance of facilities; and

(F) international operations; and

(4) not to exceed \$100,000 is for a study, led by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with relevant regulators, that—

(A) examines the financial impact of the mineral pyrrhotite in concrete home foundations; and

(B) provides recommendations on regulatory and legislative actions needed to help mitigate the financial impact described in subparagraph (A) on banks, mortgage lenders, tax revenues, and homeowners.

SA 3468. Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 21, line 23, insert after “2020;” the following: “of which \$100,000 shall be made available to the United States Geological Survey Mineral Resources Program for the development of a map depicting pyrrhotite occurrences throughout the United States;”.

SA 3469. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SAFETY IN OFFSHORE DRILLING ACTIVITIES

SEC. 117. None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to carry out a termination or diminishment of effectiveness of any rule or rulemaking, if the termination or diminishment of effectiveness would reduce safety in offshore drilling activities.

SA 3470. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. REED, Mr.

WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. NELSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

PROPOSED OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAMS

SEC. 117. None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used by the Secretary of the Interior—

(1) to approve or carry out the 2019–2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Draft Proposed Program issued by the Secretary of the Interior in January 2018 under section 18 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1344); or

(2) to prepare, approve, or carry out any other proposed oil and gas leasing program under that section that would open up new areas of the outer Continental Shelf to oil and gas exploration, development, production, or leasing.

SA 3471. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1 ____ Section 3112(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “AND KANSAS” and inserting “KANSAS, AND OREGON”;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking “state.” and inserting “State; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) Oregon may allow the operation of a truck tractor and 2 property-carrying units not in actual lawful operation on a regular or periodic basis on June 1, 1991, if—

“(A) the length of the property-carrying units does not exceed 82 feet 8 inches;

“(B) the combination is used only to transport sugar beets; and

“(C) the operation occurs on United States Route 20, United States Route 26, United States Route 30, or Oregon Route 201 in the vicinity, or between any, of—

“(i) Vale, Oregon;

“(ii) Ontario, Oregon; or

“(iii) Nyssa, Oregon.”.

SA 3472. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division A, insert the following:

SEC. 1 ____ Section 6(d)(2)(A) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(d)(2)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;
 (2) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and
 (3) by adding at the end the following:
 “(iii) any new information (within the meaning of subsection (b) of section 402.16 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)).”.

SA 3473. Mr. SCHATZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. For businesses and residents impacted by a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) in 2018 with respect to a volcano eruption or related earthquakes, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall extend the application deadline—

(1) for physical damage disaster loans under section 7(b)(1)(A) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)(1)(A)) to 60 days following the date on which the property damage occurred; and

(2) for economic injury disaster loans under section 7(b)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)(2)) on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the ongoing nature of the major disaster.

SA 3474. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “National Guard and Reserve Entrepreneurship Support Act”.

(b) **EXTENSION OF LOAN ASSISTANCE AND DEFERRAL ELIGIBILITY TO RESERVISTS BEYOND PERIODS OF MILITARY CONFLICT.**—

(1) **SMALL BUSINESS ACT AMENDMENTS.**—Section 7 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)(3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking clause (ii);

(II) by redesignating clause (i) as clause (ii);

(III) by inserting before clause (ii), as so redesignated, the following:

“(i) the term ‘active service’ has the meaning given that term in section 101(d)(3) of title 10, United States Code;”;

(IV) in clause (ii), as so redesignated, by adding “and” at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “being ordered to active military duty during a period of military conflict” and inserting “being ordered to perform active service for a period of more than 30 consecutive days”; and

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking “active duty” each place it appears and inserting “active service”; and

(iv) in subparagraph (G)(ii)(II), by striking “active duty” and inserting “active service”; and

(B) in subsection (n)—

(i) in the subsection heading, by striking “ACTIVE DUTY” and inserting “ACTIVE SERVICE”;

(ii) in paragraph (1)—

(I) by striking subparagraph (C);

(II) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as subparagraphs (B) and (C), respectively;

(III) by inserting before subparagraph (B), as so redesignated, the following:

“(A) **ACTIVE SERVICE.**—The term ‘active service’ has the meaning given that term in section 101(d)(3) of title 10, United States Code.”;

(IV) in subparagraph (B), as so redesignated, by striking “ordered to active duty during a period of military conflict” and inserting “ordered to perform active service for a period of more than 30 consecutive days”; and

(V) in subparagraph (D), by striking “active duty” each place it appears and inserting “active service”; and

(iii) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking “active duty” each place it appears and inserting “active service”.

(2) **APPLICABILITY.**—The amendments made by paragraph (1)(A) shall apply to an economic injury suffered or likely to be suffered as the result of an essential employee being ordered to perform active service (as defined in section 101(d)(3) of title 10, United States Code) for a period of more than 30 consecutive days who is discharged or released from such active service on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(3) **SEMIANNUAL REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and semiannually thereafter, the President shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the number of loans made under the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan program and the dollar volume of those loans. The report shall contain the subsidy rate of the disaster loan program as authorized under section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) with the loans made under the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan program and without those loans included.

(4) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 8(l) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(l)) is amended—

(A) by striking “The Administration” and inserting the following:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administration”;

(B) by striking “(as defined in section 7(n)(1))”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) **DEFINITION OF PERIOD OF MILITARY CONFLICT.**—In this subsection, the term ‘period of military conflict’ means—

“(A) a period of war declared by the Congress;

“(B) a period of national emergency declared by the Congress or by the President; or

“(C) a period of a contingency operation, as defined in section 101(a) of title 10, United States Code.”.

(c) **NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT AND BUSINESS TRAINING PROGRAM.**—

(1) **EXPANSION OF SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION OUTREACH PROGRAMS.**—Section 8(b)(17) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(b)(17)) is amended by striking “and members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces” and inserting “members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, and the spouses of veterans and members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces”.

(2) **ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.**—Section 32 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657) is amended by adding at the end the following:
 “(g) **NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT AND BUSINESS TRAINING.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In making grants carried out under section 8(b)(17), the Associate Administrator shall establish a program, to be known as the ‘National Guard and Reserve Deployment Support and Business Training Program’, to provide training, counseling and other assistance to support members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces and their spouses.

“(2) **AUTHORITIES.**—In carrying out this subsection, the Associate Administrator may—

“(A) modify programs and resources made available through section 8(b)(17) to provide pre-deployment and other information specific to members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces and their spouses;

“(B) collaborate with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau or the Chief’s designee, State Adjunct Generals or their designees, and other public and private partners; and

“(C) provide training, information and other resources to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau or the Chief’s designee and State Adjunct Generals or their designees for the purpose of supporting members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces and the spouses of veterans and members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces.”.

SA 3475. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 223, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following

SEC. 527. Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of General Services shall submit to Congress a report that describes the ways in which the General Services Administration ensures equal public access to Federal buildings in the New England region, including—

(1) an analysis of each occasion during the 18-month period ending on the date of enactment of this Act in which a Federal agency has limited, prevented, or permanently denied access to a Federal building in the region to any individual or group;

(2) a description of the 1 or more specific justifications of the applicable Federal agency with respect to each limitation, prevention, or denial of access analyzed under paragraph (1); and

(3) an analysis of whether each justification described under paragraph (2) complies with Federal law (including regulations).

SA 3476. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall continue to engage in efforts authorized by the Violence Against

Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-4; 127 Stat. 54) to ensure that survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault are not unlawfully evicted or denied housing by certain landlords based on their experience as survivors.

(b) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall submit to Congress a report on the efforts described in subsection (a).

SA 3477. Mr. WICKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title V of division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) None of the funds made available under this Act for the Mobility Fund Phase II auction may be used to conduct such an auction until the Federal Communications Commission completes a rulemaking that reassesses the data collection procedures that were used to develop the initial eligible areas map for Mobility Fund Phase II, including by examining whether different factors should be used to create a more accurate map that lessens the burden on persons engaging in the challenge process.

(b) For purposes of this section—

(1) the term “challenge process” means the process established by the Federal Communications Commission under which a person may challenge the initial determination that an area is ineligible for universal service support provided under Mobility Fund Phase II; and

(2) the term “Mobility Fund Phase II” means the second phase of the proceeding to provide universal service support from the Mobility Fund (WC Docket No. 10-90; WT Docket No. 10-208).

SA 3478. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the City of Sand Springs, Oklahoma, shall be eligible for loans and grants provided under the rural community advancement program under subtitle E of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009 et seq.).

SA 3479. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) In this section—

(1) the terms “depository institution” and “State” have the meanings given those

terms in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813); and

(2) the term “major disaster” has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122).

(b)(1) Not later than 15 days after the date on which a designated point of contact within the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation receives notice from the President or the Governor of a State that the President has declared a major disaster under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) or the Governor has declared a state of disaster for all or part of that State, as applicable, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation shall issue guidance to depository institutions located in the area for which the President declared the major disaster or the Governor declared a state of disaster, as applicable, for reducing regulatory burdens for borrowers and communities in order to facilitate recovery from the disaster.

(2) The guidance issued under paragraph (1) shall include instructions from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation consistent with existing flexibility for a major disaster declared under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170).

(c) Not later than 180 days of the date of enactment of this Act, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the National Credit Union Administration shall jointly issue guidance for depository institutions affected by a state of disaster that is comparable to the guidance issued by those entities in December 2017 entitled “Interagency Supervisory Examiner Guidance for Institutions Affected by a Major Disaster”.

SA 3480. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1 _____. The Secretary of Transportation shall consult with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works to identify any existing authorities and any additional authorities that may be needed to leverage funds from Department of Transportation programs for purposes of inland waterway project costs.

SA 3481. Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Ms. WARREN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by any Department or agency to carry out activities that prevent or interfere with the implementation of State laws that authorize the use, distribution, possession, or cultivation of marijuana, unless such activities directly implicate 1 or more of the Federal enforce-

ment priorities described in the memoranda by James M. Cole, entitled “Guidance Regarding Marijuana Enforcement” dated August 29, 2013, and entitled “Guidance Regarding Marijuana Financial Crimes” dated February 14, 2014.

SA 3482. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 84, line 5, insert after “2022” the following: “, of which not less than \$500,000 shall be made available for wood utilization research to develop woody and agricultural biomass conversion of low-value woody biomass using microwave-assisted liquefaction”.

SA 3483. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV of division A, add the following:

PROHIBITION OF FUNDS TO CLOSE THE SOUTHERN RESEARCH STATION ALEXANDRIA FORESTRY CENTER

SEC. 43 _____. (a) None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of Agriculture to relocate activities, resources, or personnel from, or permanently close, the Southern Research Station Alexandria Forestry Center in Pineville, Louisiana.

(b) The Secretary shall—

(1) reach out to stakeholders of the Utilization of Southern Forest Resources research work unit (RWU-4704) to gather feedback from the stakeholders relating to the best ways to ensure the maintenance of a viable research program at the research station referred to in subsection (a); and

(2) based on the feedback provided under paragraph (1), develop a strategy for maintaining that research program.

SA 3484. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 497, line 6, insert “(including enhanced vouchers for projects that have received or are receiving State-funded interest reduction payments), HOPE VI vouchers” after “Act”.

SA 3485. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related

agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. In administering the pilot program established by section 779 of division A of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141), the Secretary of Agriculture shall—

(1) ensure that rural areas that are determined to be ineligible for the pilot program have a means of appealing or otherwise challenging that determination in a timely fashion; and

(2) in determining whether an entity may overbuild or duplicate broadband expansion efforts made by any entity that has received a broadband loan from the Rural Utilities Service, not consider loans that were rescinded or defaulted on, or loans the terms and conditions of which were not met, if the entity under consideration has not previously defaulted on, or failed to meet the terms and conditions of, a Rural Utilities Service loan or had a Rural Utilities Service loan rescinded.

SA 3486. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title I of division D, insert the following after section 119F:

SEC. _____. IMPROVING THE ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE PROGRAM.—Section 41731 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN LOCATIONS WITH HIGH MILITARY USE.—Subparagraph (D) of subsection (a)(1) shall not apply with respect to any location that—

“(1) is certified under part 139 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations;

“(2) is not owned by the Federal government; and

“(3) for which not less than 10 percent of airport operations in 2017 were by aircraft of the Armed Forces.”.

SA 3487. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REFORMS AND OVERSIGHT TO U.S. FOREST SERVICE CONTRACTING.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) H-2B NONIMMIGRANT.—The term “H-2B nonimmigrant” means a nonimmigrant described in section 101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(b)).

(2) PROSPECTIVE H-2B EMPLOYER.—The term “prospective H-2B employer” means a United States business that is considering employing 1 or more H-2B nonimmigrants.

(3) STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY.—Except as used in subsection (b), the term “State work-

force agency” means the workforce agency of the State in which the prospective H-2B employer intends to employ H-2B nonimmigrants.

(b) DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.—

(1) RECRUITMENT.—As a component of the labor certification process required before H-2B nonimmigrants are offered employment through United States Forest Service timber or service contracts in the United States, the Secretary of Labor shall require all prospective H-2B employers, before submitting a petition to hire H-2B nonimmigrants, to conduct a robust effort to recruit United States workers, including—

(A) advertising at employment or job-placement events, such as job fairs;

(B) advertising with State or local workforce agencies, nonprofit organizations, or other appropriate entities, and working with such entities to identify potential employees;

(C) advertising in appropriate media, including local radio stations and commonly used, reputable Internet job-search sites;

(D) provide potential United States workers at least 30 days from the date on which a job announcement is posted (or such longer period as the State workforce considers appropriate) to apply for such employment in person, by mail, by email, or by facsimile machine;

(E) include a valid phone number that potential United States workers may call to get additional information about such employment opportunity; and

(F) such other recruitment strategies as the State workforce agency considers appropriate for the sector or positions for which H-2B nonimmigrants would be considered.

(2) SEPARATE PETITIONS.—A prospective H-2B employer shall submit a separate petition for each State in which the employer plans to employ H-2B nonimmigrants as part of a United States Forest Service timber or service contract for a period of 7 days or longer.

(c) STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES.—The Secretary of Labor may not grant a temporary labor certification to a prospective H-2B employer seeking to employ H-2B nonimmigrants as part of a United States Forest Service timber or service contract until after the Director of the State workforce agency—

(1) has provided United States workers who may be interested in the position with application instructions;

(2) has formally consulted with the workforce agency director of each contiguous State listed on the prospective H-2B employer's application and determined that—

(A) the employer has complied with all recruitment requirements set forth in subsection (b) and there is a legitimate demand for the employment of H-2B nonimmigrants in each of those States; or

(B) the employer has amended the application by removing or making appropriate modifications with respect to the States in which the criteria set forth in subparagraph (A) have not been met;

(3) certifies that the prospective H-2B employer has complied with all recruitment requirements set forth in subsection (b) or any other applicable provision of law; and

(4) makes a formal determination and certifies to the Secretary of Labor that nationals of the United States are not qualified or available to fill the employment opportunities offered by the prospective H-2B employer.

(d) SUPPLEMENTAL FEE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor shall collect a supplemental fee from each prospective H-2B employer in conjunction with each petition for labor certifi-

cation under section 212(a)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(5)).

(2) AMOUNT.—The Secretary of Labor shall determine the amount of the fee collected under paragraph (1) based on the estimated costs to carry out this section.

(3) WAIVER.—The fee authorized under paragraph (1) shall be waived on behalf of any prospective H-2B employer that, during the 3 fiscal years immediately preceding the filing of a petition for labor certification, did not commit a major violation of—

(A) the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.);

(B) the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.); or

(C) the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.).

(4) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The fee authorized under paragraph (1) shall be collected beginning on the first day of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3488. Mr. DONNELLY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title III of division C, insert the following:

RURAL HEALTH AND SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Any funds provided by this Act for rural health and safety education programs authorized under section 502(i) of the Rural Development Act of 1972 (7 U.S.C. 2662(i)) shall be used under those programs to address the opioid abuse epidemic and to combat opioid abuse in rural communities.

SA 3489. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 187, line 19, insert “: *Provided*, That funds appropriated under this heading shall be used to submit to Congress, not later than a year after the date of enactment of this Act, a report that identifies jurisdictions that have a high number of civil jury trials and the practices and methods those jurisdictions use to encourage jury trials, including docket management techniques, discovery practices, and other methods to make jury trials a cost efficient and effective option in civil litigation” before the period at the end.

SA 3490. Mr. UDALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING REAUTHORIZATIONS.

(a) NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION ACT OF 1996.—Funds authorized to be appropriated under sections 108, 605(b), and 824 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4117; 4195(b); 4243) shall be so authorized for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2025.

(b) HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1992.—Funds authorized to be appropriated under paragraphs (5)(C) and (7) of section 184(i) and paragraphs (5)(C) and (7) of section 184A(j) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (12 U.S.C. 1715z–13a(i); 1715z–13b(j)) shall be so authorized for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2025.

SA 3491. Mr. UDALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1 ____. Section 207(n)(1) of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “21 months after such date of enactment” and inserting “June 4, 2019”; and

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking “30 months after such date of enactment” and inserting “on December 3, 2019”.

SA 3492. Mrs. FISCHER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 455, between lines 18 and 19, insert the following:

SEC. 13 ____. To the maximum extent practicable, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration shall ensure the safe and timely completion of the flexible sleeper berth pilot program of the Administration.

SA 3493. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. ____. Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to Congress a report describing the ways in which conservation programs administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service may be better used for the conservation of ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*) and any action taken by the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service relating to the conservation of ocelots.

SA 3494. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 18, strike the period at the end and insert “: *Provided further*, That, of the amounts made available under this heading, not less than \$1,000,000 shall be used for breeding and recovery activities for ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*).”.

SA 3495. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. INCREASE NATIONAL LIMITATION AMOUNT FOR QUALIFIED HIGHWAY OR SURFACE FREIGHT TRANSFER FACILITY BONDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 142(m)(2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “\$15,000,000,000” and inserting “\$20,000,000,000”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to bonds issued after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3496. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Federal Transit Administration under this title may be used in awarding a contract or subcontract to an entity on or after the date of enactment of this Act for the procurement of an asset within the mass transit and passenger rail or freight rail subsectors included within the transportation systems sector defined by President Policy Directive 21 (Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience) including rolling stock, and the ensuing regulations, if the entity is owned, directed, or subsidized by a country that—

(1) is identified as a nonmarket economy country (as defined in section 771(18) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1677(18))) as of the date of enactment of this Act;

(2) was identified by the United States Trade Representative in the most recent report required by section 182 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2242) as a priority foreign country under subsection (a)(2) of that section; and

(3) is subject to monitoring by the Trade Representative under section 306 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2416).

(b) This section shall be applied in a manner consistent with the obligations of the

United States under international agreements.

SA 3497. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PUBLICATION OF GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS IN THE INTERNET.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the meaning given that term in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) GUIDANCE DOCUMENT.—

(A) DEFINITION.—The term “guidance document”—

(i) means an agency statement of general applicability, other than a rule promulgated under section 553 of title 5, United States Code, that—

(I) does not have the force and effect of law; and

(II) is designated by an agency official as setting forth—

(aa) a policy on a statutory, regulatory, or technical issue; or

(bb) an interpretation of a statutory or regulatory issue; and

(ii) may include—

(I) a memorandum;

(II) a notice;

(III) a bulletin;

(IV) a directive;

(V) a news release;

(VI) a letter;

(VII) a blog post;

(VIII) a no-action letter;

(IX) a speech by an agency official; and

(X) any combination of the items described in subclauses (I) through (IX).

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The term “guidance document”—

(i) shall be construed broadly to effectuate the purpose and intent of this Act; and

(ii) shall not be limited to the items described in subparagraph (A)(ii).

(b) PUBLICATION OF GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS ON THE INTERNET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date on which an agency issues a guidance document, the agency shall publish the guidance document in accordance with the requirements under paragraph (3).

(2) PREVIOUSLY ISSUED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, each agency shall publish, in accordance with the requirements under paragraph (3), any guidance document issued by that agency that is in effect on that date.

(3) SINGLE LOCATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—All guidance documents published under paragraphs (1) and (2) by an agency shall be published in a single location on the Internet website under section 206(d) of the E-Government Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. 3501 note) (commonly known as regulations.gov).

(B) AGENCY INTERNET WEBSITES.—Each agency shall, for guidance documents published by the agency under paragraphs (1) and (2), publish a hyperlink on the Internet website of the agency that provides access to the guidance documents at the location described in subparagraph (A).

(C) ORGANIZATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The guidance documents described in subparagraph (A) shall be—

(I) categorized as guidance documents; and
(II) further divided into subcategories as appropriate.

(ii) AGENCY INTERNET WEBSITES.—The hyperlinks described in subparagraph (B) shall be prominently displayed on the Internet website of the agency.

(4) RESCINDED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS.—On the date on which a guidance document issued by an agency is rescinded, the agency shall, at the location described in paragraph (3)(A)—

(A) maintain the rescinded guidance document; and

(B) indicate—

(i) that the guidance document is rescinded; and

(ii) the date on which the guidance document was rescinded.

(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to compel or authorize the disclosure of information that is prohibited from disclosure by law.

SA 3498. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7131 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e)(1)(A) Not later than March 31 of each calendar year, the Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget, shall submit to each House of Congress a report on the operation of this section during the fiscal year last ending before the start of such calendar year.

“(B) Not later than December 31 of each calendar year, each agency (as defined by section 7103(a)(3)) shall furnish to the Office of Personnel Management the information which such Office requires, with respect to such agency, for purposes of the report which is next due under subparagraph (A).

“(2) Each report by the Office of Personnel Management under this subsection shall include, with respect to the fiscal year described in paragraph (1)(A), at least the following information:

“(A) The total amount of official time granted to employees.

“(B) The average amount of official time expended per bargaining unit employee.

“(C) The specific types of activities or purposes for which official time was granted, and the impact which the granting of such official time for such activities or purposes had on agency operations.

“(D) The total number of employees to whom official time was granted, and, of that total, the number who were not engaged in any activities or purposes except activities or purposes involving the use of official time.

“(E) The total amount of compensation (including fringe benefits) afforded to employees in connection with activities or purposes for which they were granted official time.

“(F) The total amount of official time spent by employees representing Federal employees who are not union members in matters authorized by this chapter.

“(G) A description of any room or space designated at the agency (or its subcomponent) where official time activities will be

conducted, including the square footage of any such room or space.

“(3) All information included in a report by the Office of Personnel Management under this subsection with respect to a fiscal year—

“(A) shall be shown both agency-by-agency and for all agencies; and

“(B) shall be accompanied by the corresponding information (submitted by the Office in its report under this subsection) for the fiscal year before the fiscal year to which such report pertains, together with appropriate comparisons and analyses.

“(4) For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘official time’ means any period of time, regardless of agency nomenclature—

“(A) which may be granted to an employee under this chapter (including a collective bargaining agreement entered into under this chapter) to perform representational or consultative functions; and

“(B) during which the employee would otherwise be in a duty status.”

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall be effective beginning with the report which, under the provisions of such amendment, is first required to be submitted by the Office of Personnel Management to each House of Congress by a date which occurs at least 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3499. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike sections 604 and 608.

On page 188, line 14, strike “transfers:” and all that follows through line 18 and insert “transfers.”

On page 238, line 9, strike “transfers:” and all that follows through line 13 and insert “transfers.”

SA 3500. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . (a) No funds made available under this Act may be used for taxpayer funded union time under section 7131 of title 5 of the United States Code, unless—

(1) the time is authorized for an employee to represent an exclusive representative in the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement under section 7131(a) of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the time is authorized for an employee to conduct activities described in section 4(a)(v)(2) of Executive Order 13837 (83 Fed. Reg. 25335; relating to ensuring transparency, accountability, and efficiency in taxpayer-funded union time use); or

(3) the Director of the Office of Management and Budget has submitted to Congress, with respect to fiscal year 2018, a report that includes, both agency-by-agency and for all agencies, the following:

(A) The total amount of taxpayer funded union time granted to employees.

(B) The average amount of taxpayer funded union time expended per bargaining unit employee.

(C) The specific types of activities or purposes for which taxpayer funded union time was granted, and the impact which the granting of such taxpayer funded union time for such activities or purposes had on agency operations.

(D) The total number of employees to whom taxpayer funded union time was granted, and, of that total, the number who were not engaged in any activities or purposes except activities or purposes involving the use of taxpayer funded union time.

(E) The total amount of compensation (including fringe benefits) afforded to employees in connection with activities or purposes for which they were granted taxpayer funded union time.

(F) The total amount of taxpayer funded union time spent by employees representing Federal employees who are not union members in matters authorized by chapter 71 of title 5, United States Code.

(G) A description of any room or space designated at the agency (or its subcomponent) where taxpayer funded union time activities are conducted, including the square footage of any such room or space.

(b) In this section, the term “taxpayer funded union time” means any period of time, regardless of agency nomenclature—

(1) which may be granted to an employee under chapter 71 of title 5, United States Code, to perform representational or consultative functions; and

(2) during which the employee would otherwise be in a duty status.

SA 3501. Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. COTTON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act or any other Act with respect to any fiscal year may be used to implement, administer, or enforce the final rule with the regulation identifier number 0910-AG38 published by the Food and Drug Administration in the Federal Register on May 10, 2016 (81 Fed. Reg. 28974) with respect to traditional large and premium cigars. For the purposes of this section, the term “traditional large and premium cigar” means—

(1) any roll of tobacco that is wrapped in 100 percent leaf tobacco, is bunched with 100 percent tobacco filler, contains no filter, tip, or non-tobacco mouthpiece, weighs at least 6 pounds per 1,000 count; and

(A) has a 100 percent leaf tobacco binder and is hand rolled;

(B) has a 100 percent leaf tobacco binder and is made using human hands to lay the leaf tobacco wrapper or binder onto only one machine that bunches, wraps, and caps each individual cigar; or

(C) has a homogenized tobacco leaf binder and is made in the United States using human hands to lay each 100 percent leaf tobacco wrapper individually onto a single machine that bunches, wraps, and caps each individual cigar on such single machine and makes no more than 15 cigars per minute; and

(2) is not a cigarette or a little cigar (as such terms are defined in paragraphs (3) and

(11), respectively, of section 900 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 387)).

SA 3502. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. NELSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . WORKING GROUP ON IMPROVING THE LIVESTOCK, INSECT, AND AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES TRANSPORT INDUSTRIES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—The term “agricultural commodity” means—

(A) an agricultural commodity as defined in section 518 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1518); and

(B) an agricultural commodity as defined in section 395.2 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations).

(2) LIVESTOCK.—The term “livestock” has the meaning given the term in section 602 of the Emergency Livestock Feed Assistance Act of 1988 (7 U.S.C. 1471).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Transportation.

(4) WORKING GROUP.—The term “working group” means the working group established by the Secretary under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a working group—

(1) to identify obstacles to safe, humane, and market-efficient transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities; and

(2) to develop guidelines and recommended regulatory or legislative actions to improve the safe, humane, and efficient transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities.

(c) OUTREACH.—In carrying out the duties of the working group under subsection (b), the working group shall consult with—

(1) interested Governors;

(2) representatives of State and local agricultural and highway safety agencies;

(3) other representatives of relevant State and local agencies;

(4) members of the public with experience in—

(A) the livestock, insect, and agricultural commodities industries;

(B) the livestock trucking industry; or

(C) transportation safety; and

(5) any other groups or stakeholders that the working group determines to be appropriate.

(d) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the duties of the working group under subsection (b), the working group shall—

(1) consider the impact of the existing hours of service regulations under subpart A of part 395 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), on the commercial transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities;

(2) identify incompatibilities and other challenges and concerns caused by the hours of service regulations described in paragraph (1) and electronic logging device regulations under subpart B of part 395 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), on the transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities;

(3) identify initiatives and regulatory changes that maintain and protect the safe-

ty of highways and allow for the safe, efficient, and productive marketplace transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities; and

(4) consider such other issues as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(e) COMPOSITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary (or a designee) shall serve as the chair of the working group.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The working group shall be composed of members appointed by the Secretary, including individuals with knowledge and expertise that includes highway safety, the commercial motor vehicle and transportation industries, animal husbandry, and the transportation of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—The working group shall include, at a minimum, representatives of—

(i) the Department of Agriculture;

(ii) State agencies, including State departments of agriculture and transportation;

(iii) highway and commercial motor vehicle safety organizations;

(iv) agricultural producers including producers of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities; and

(v) commercial motor vehicle operators, including small business operators and operators who haul livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities.

(f) WORKING GROUP REPORT AND REGULATORY ACTION.—

(1) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the working group is established, the working group shall submit to the Secretary a report that includes—

(A) the findings of the working group, including a summary of the views expressed by individuals and entities consulted under subsection (c); and

(B) the initiatives and regulatory and legislative changes that the working group identifies as necessary to protect the safety of highways and allow for the safe, efficient, and productive marketplace transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities.

(2) REGULATORY CHANGES.—Not later than 120 days after the date on which the Secretary receives the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall propose regulatory changes that take into account the findings and recommendations of the working group, including—

(A) changes to the hours of service regulations under subpart A of part 395 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

(B) changes to the electronic logging device regulations under subpart B of part 395 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), including changes to regulations relating to the performance and design of electronic logging devices; and

(C) any other changes that the working group recommends.

(3) APPLICATION.—Subsections (a) through (f) of section 31137 of title 49, United States Code (including any regulations promulgated to carry out those subsections), shall not apply to commercial motor vehicles hauling livestock, insects, or agricultural commodities until the date on which the Secretary proposes regulatory changes under paragraph (2).

(g) REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY SECRETARY.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary receives the report of the working group under subsection (f)(1), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report, including—

(1) a summary of the views expressed by the individuals and entities consulted under subsection (c);

(2) a description of the findings of the working group, including the identification of any areas of general consensus among the non-Federal participants in the consultation under subsection (c); and

(3) any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that would assist in maintaining and improving the safe, humane, and market-efficient transport of livestock, insects, and agricultural commodities.

SA 3503. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____ —PROTECTING AMERICAN VOTES AND ELECTIONS

SEC. ____ 1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Protecting American Votes and Elections Act of 2018”.

SEC. ____ 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Access to the ballot, free and fair elections, and a trustworthy election process are at the core of American Democracy. Just as the Founding Fathers signed their names to paper supporting their views for a government by and for the people, access to the paper ballot is the best way to ensure elections stay by and for the American people. Using paper provides an easily auditable, tamper proof, and simple way for citizens to access their ballot. It is for these reasons and more that using paper ballots to ensure resilient and fair elections should be the priority of this Nation.

(2) Risk-limiting audits will help to protect our elections from cyberattacks, by ensuring that if the electoral outcome is incorrect, for instance because someone tampered with the electronic counts or reporting, the audit has a large, known probability of correcting the outcome by requiring a full hand count. Paper ballots are vital to the audit process since, other than through manual inspection of a sample of paper ballots, there is currently no reliable way to determine whether an election was hacked or the outcome was miscalculated.

(3) Risk-limiting audits are a cost effective way of auditing election results. They generally require inspecting only a small percentage of the ballots cast in an election, and proceed to a full hand count only when sampling does not provide strong evidence that the reported outcome is correct. This will ensure that Americans have confidence in their election results, without the cost of a full recount of every ballot in the country.

SEC. ____ 3. PAPER BALLOT AND MANUAL COUNTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 301(a)(2) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081(a)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) PAPER BALLOT REQUIREMENT.—

“(A) VOTER-VERIFIED PAPER BALLOTS.—

“(i) PAPER BALLOT REQUIREMENT.—(I) The voting system shall require the use of an individual, durable, voter-verified, paper ballot of the voter’s vote that shall be marked and made available for inspection and

verification by the voter before the voter's vote is cast and counted, and which shall be counted by hand or read by an optical character recognition device or other counting device. For purposes of this subclause, the term 'individual, durable, voter-verified, paper ballot' means a paper ballot marked by the voter by hand or a paper ballot marked through the use of a nontabulating ballot marking device or system, so long as the voter shall have the option to mark his or her ballot by hand.

“(II) Except as required to meet the accessibility requirements under paragraph (3), the printed or marked vote selections on any ballot marked through the use of a ballot marking device or system that are used for vote counting or auditing shall allow inspection and verification by the voter under subclause (I) without the aid of any machine or other equipment.

“(III) The voting system shall provide the voter with an opportunity to correct any error on the paper ballot before the permanent voter-verified paper ballot is preserved in accordance with clause (ii).

“(IV) The voting system shall not preserve the voter-verified paper ballots in any manner that makes it possible, at any time after the ballot has been cast, to associate a voter with the record of the voter's vote without the voter's consent.

“(i) PRESERVATION AS OFFICIAL RECORD.—The individual, durable, voter-verified, paper ballot used in accordance with clause (i) shall constitute the official ballot and shall be preserved and used as the official ballot for purposes of any recount or audit conducted with respect to any election for Federal office in which the voting system is used.

“(iii) MANUAL COUNTING REQUIREMENTS FOR RECOUNTS AND AUDITS.—(I) Each paper ballot used pursuant to clause (i) shall be suitable for a manual audit, and shall be counted by hand in any recount or audit conducted with respect to any election for Federal office.

“(II) In the event of any inconsistencies or irregularities between any electronic vote tallies and the vote tallies determined by counting by hand the individual, durable, voter-verified, paper ballots used pursuant to clause (i), and subject to subparagraph (B), the individual, durable, voter-verified, paper ballots shall be the true and correct record of the votes cast.

“(iv) APPLICATION TO ALL BALLOTS.—The requirements of this subparagraph shall apply to all ballots cast in elections for Federal office, including ballots cast by absent uniformed services voters and overseas voters under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and other absentee voters.

“(B) SPECIAL RULE FOR TREATMENT OF DISPUTES WHEN PAPER BALLOTS HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO BE COMPROMISED.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the event that—

“(I) there is any inconsistency between any electronic vote tallies and the vote tallies determined by counting by hand the individual, durable, voter-verified, paper ballots used pursuant to subparagraph (A)(i) with respect to any election for Federal office; and

“(II) it is demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence (as determined in accordance with the applicable standards in the jurisdiction involved) in any recount, audit, or contest of the result of the election that the paper ballots have been compromised (by damage or mischief or otherwise) and that a sufficient number of the ballots have been so compromised that the result of the election could be changed,

the determination of the appropriate remedy with respect to the election shall be made in

accordance with applicable State law, except that the electronic tally shall not be used as the exclusive basis for determining the official certified result.

“(ii) RULE FOR CONSIDERATION OF BALLOTS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH VOTING MACHINE.—For purposes of clause (i), only the paper ballots deemed compromised, if any, shall be considered in the calculation of whether or not the result of the election could be changed due to the compromised paper ballots.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT CLARIFYING APPLICABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY.—Section 301(a)(4) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 21081(a)(4)) is amended by inserting “(including the paper ballots required to be used under paragraph (2))” after “voting system”.

(c) OTHER CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 301(a)(1) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 21081(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking “counted” and inserting “counted, in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3)”;

(2) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking “counted” and inserting “counted, in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3)”;

(3) in subparagraph (A)(iii), by striking “counted” each place it appears and inserting “counted, in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3)”;

(4) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking “counted” and inserting “counted, in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3)”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Notwithstanding section 301(d) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081(d)), each State and jurisdiction shall be required to comply with the amendments made by this section for the regularly scheduled election for Federal office in November 2020, and for each subsequent election for Federal office.

SEC. 4. ACCESSIBILITY AND BALLOT VERIFICATION FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 301(a)(3)(B) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081(a)(3)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

“(B)(i) satisfy the requirement of subparagraph (A) through the use of at least 1 voting system equipped for individuals with disabilities, including nonvisual and enhanced visual accessibility for the blind and visually impaired, and nonmanual and enhanced manual accessibility for the mobility and dexterity impaired, at each polling place; and

“(ii) meet the requirements of subparagraph (A) and paragraph (2)(A) by using a system that allows the voter to privately and independently verify the permanent paper ballot through the presentation, in accessible form, of the printed or marked vote selections from the same printed or marked information that would be used for any vote counting or auditing; and”.

(b) SPECIFIC REQUIREMENT OF STUDY, TESTING, AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACCESSIBLE PAPER BALLOT VERIFICATION MECHANISMS.—

(1) STUDY AND REPORTING.—Subtitle C of title II of such Act (52 U.S.C. 21081 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 246 the following new section:

“SEC. 246A. STUDY AND REPORT ON ACCESSIBLE PAPER BALLOT VERIFICATION MECHANISMS.

“(a) STUDY AND REPORT.—The Director of the National Science Foundation shall make grants to not fewer than 3 eligible entities to study, test, and develop accessible paper ballot voting, verification, and casting mechanisms and devices and best practices to enhance the accessibility of paper ballot voting and verification mechanisms for individuals with disabilities, for voters whose primary language is not English, and for voters with difficulties in literacy, including best practices for the mechanisms themselves and the processes through which the mechanisms are used.

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—An entity is eligible to receive a grant under this part if it submits to the Director (at such time and in such form as the Director may require) an application containing—

“(1) certifications that the entity shall specifically investigate enhanced methods or devices, including non-electronic devices, that will assist such individuals and voters in marking voter-verified paper ballots and presenting or transmitting the information printed or marked on such ballots back to such individuals and voters, and casting such ballots;

“(2) a certification that the entity shall complete the activities carried out with the grant not later than December 31, 2020; and

“(3) such other information and certifications as the Director may require.

“(c) AVAILABILITY OF TECHNOLOGY.—Any technology developed with the grants made under this section shall be treated as nonproprietary and shall be made available to the public, including to manufacturers of voting systems.

“(d) COORDINATION WITH GRANTS FOR TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS.—The Director shall carry out this section so that the activities carried out with the grants made under subsection (a) are coordinated with the research conducted under the grant program carried out by the Commission under section 271, to the extent that the Director and Commission determine necessary to provide for the advancement of accessible voting technology.

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out subsection (a) \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 246 the following new item:

“Sec. 246A. Study and report on accessible paper ballot verification mechanisms.”.

SEC. 5. RISK-LIMITING AUDITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 303 the following new section:

“SEC. 303A. RISK-LIMITING AUDITS.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) RISK-LIMITING AUDIT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘risk-limiting audit’ means a post-election process such that, if the reported outcome of the contest is incorrect, there is at least a 95 percent chance that the audit will replace the incorrect outcome with the correct outcome as determined by a full, hand-to-eye tabulation of all votes validly cast in that election contest that ascertains voter intent manually and directly from voter-verifiable paper records.

“(B) REPORTED OUTCOME.—The term ‘reported outcome’ means the outcome of an election contest which is determined according to the canvass and which will become the official, certified outcome unless it is revised by an audit, recount, or other legal process.

“(C) INCORRECT OUTCOME.—The term ‘incorrect outcome’ means an outcome that differs from the outcome that would be determined by a full tabulation of all votes validly cast in that election contest, determining voter intent manually, directly from voter-verifiable paper records.

“(D) OUTCOME.—The term ‘outcome’ means the winner or set of winners of an election contest, which might be candidates or positions.

“(2) BALLOT MANIFEST.—The term ‘ballot manifest’ means a record maintained by each county that—

“(A) is created without reliance on any part of the voting system used to tabulate votes;

“(B) functions as a sampling frame for conducting a risk-limiting audit; and

“(C) contains the following information about ballots cast and counted:

“(i) The total number of ballots cast and counted in the election (including undervotes, overvotes, and other invalid votes).

“(ii) The total number of ballots cast in each contest in the election (including undervotes, overvotes, and other invalid votes).

“(iii) A precise description of the manner in which the ballots are physically stored, including the total number of physical groups of ballots, the numbering system for each group, a unique label for each group, and the number of ballots in each such group.

“(b) REQUIREMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) AUDITS.—Each State and jurisdiction shall administer risk-limiting audits of the results of all elections for Federal office held in the State in accordance with the requirements of paragraph (2).

“(B) FULL MANUAL TALLY.—If a risk-limiting audit conducted under subparagraph (A) leads to a full manual tally of an election contest, the State or jurisdiction shall use the results of the full manual tally as the official results of the election contest.

“(2) AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) RULES AND PROCEDURES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Risk-limiting audits shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and procedures established by the chief State election official of the State not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section.

“(ii) MATTERS INCLUDED.—The rules and procedures established under clause (i) may include the following:

“(I) Rules for ensuring the security of ballots and documenting that prescribed procedures were followed.

“(II) Rules and procedures for ensuring the accuracy of ballot manifests produced by jurisdictions.

“(III) Rules and procedures for governing the format of ballot manifests, cast vote records, and other data involved in risk-limiting audits.

“(IV) Methods to ensure that any cast vote records used in a risk-limiting audit are those used by the voting system to tally the election results sent to the Secretary of State and made public.

“(V) Procedures for the random selection of ballots to be inspected manually during each audit.

“(VI) Rules for the calculations and other methods to be used in the audit and to determine whether and when the audit of each contest is complete.

“(VII) Procedures and requirements for testing any software used to conduct risk-limiting audits.

“(B) TIMING.—The risk-limiting audit shall be completed not later than the date that the result of the election is certified by the State.

“(C) PUBLIC REPORT.—After the completion of the risk-limiting audit, the State shall publish a report on the results of the audit, together with such information as necessary to confirm that the audit was conducted properly.

“(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Each State and jurisdiction shall be required to comply with the requirements of this section for the regularly scheduled election for Federal office in November 2020, and for each subsequent election for Federal office.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS RELATED TO ENFORCEMENT.—Section 401 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 21111) is amended by striking “and 303” and inserting “303, and 303A”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 303 the following new item:

“Sec. 303A. Risk-limiting audits.”.

SA 3504. Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, using the latest version of National Fire Protection Association 403, “Standard for Aircraft Rescue and Fire-Fighting Services at Airports”, and in coordination with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, aircraft manufacturers and airports, shall not require the use of fluorinated chemicals to meet the performance standards referenced in chapter 6 of AC No: 150/5210-6D and acceptable under 139.319(1) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

SA 3505. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 148, line 25, strike “\$17,500,000” and insert “\$28,800,000”.

SA 3506. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a)(1) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act or any other Act for the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel Program may be used on or after the date of the enactment of this Act to enter into a contract related to the acquisition, construction, or conversion of a vessel unless—

(A) the vessel is to be constructed or converted in the United States; and

(B) the steel, iron, aluminum, and manufactured products to be used in the construction or conversion of the vessel are produced in the United States.

(2) The head of the agency responsible for a contract described under paragraph (1) may waive the restriction under such paragraph on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives that adequate domestic supplies are not available on a timely and cost-competitive basis.

(b)(1) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act or any other Act for the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel Program may be used to procure any of the following components for vessels unless the items are manufactured in the United States:

(A) Circuit breakers.

(B) Welded shipboard anchor and mooring chain with a diameter of four inches or less.

(C) Power conversion equipment.

(D) Electric generators and alternators.

(E) Auxiliary equipment, including pumps, for all shipboard services.

(F) Propulsion system components (engines, reduction gears, and propellers).

(G) Shipboard cranes.

(H) Spreaders for shipboard cranes.

(I) Capstans.

(J) Winches.

(K) Hoists.

(L) Outboard motors.

(M) Windlasses.

(N) To the extent they are unique to marine applications, gyrocompasses, electronic navigation chart systems, steering controls, pumps, propulsion and machinery control systems, and totally enclosed lifeboats.

(O) Powered and non-powered valves in Federal Supply Classes 4810 and 4820.

(P) Machine tools in the Federal Supply Classes for metal-working machinery numbered 3405, 3408, 3410 through 3419, 3426, 3433, 3438, 3441 through 3443, 3445, 3446, 3448, 3449, 3460, and 3461.

(2) The head of the agency responsible for a procurement described in paragraph (1) may waive the restrictions under such paragraph on a case-by-case basis by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives that adequate domestic supplies are not available on a timely and cost-competitive basis.

(3) The restrictions under paragraph (1) shall not apply to contracts in effect as of the date of the enactment of this Act or to a procurement of spare or repair parts needed to support components for vessels produced or manufactured outside of the United States.

SA 3507. Ms. DUCKWORTH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 223, line 21, strike “\$44,490,000” and insert “49,490,000”.

SA 3508. Ms. DUCKWORTH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency makes an appointment under section 11(b) of the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 300j-10), the Administrator shall provide notification of the appointment to—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(3) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate;

(4) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(5) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(6) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

(b) The notification under subsection (a) shall include the following information about the appointment:

(1) The name of the appointee.

(2) The title of the appointee.

(3) The salary of the appointee.

(4) A detailed justification explaining why the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency deemed the appointment necessary to appropriately discharge the functions of the Administrator under the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.) and other provisions of law.

SA 3509. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) **UNDUE HARDSHIP.**—No funds made available in this or any other appropriations Act may be used, including by any contractor of the Federal Government, to contest a claim that is made—

(1) in any proceeding under section 523(a)(8) of title 11, United States Code, that excepting a debt from discharge would constitute an undue hardship; ; and

(2) by a debtor who—

(A) is receiving benefits under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) or title XVI of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.) on the basis of disability;

(B) has been determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to be unemployable due to a service-connected disability;

(C) is a family caregiver of an eligible veteran pursuant to section 1720G of title 38;

(D) is a member of a household that has a gross income that is less than 200 percent of the poverty line, and provides for the care and support of an elderly, disabled, or chronically ill member of the household of the debtor or member of the immediate family of the debtor;

(E) is a member of a household that has a gross income that is less than 200 percent of the poverty line, and the income of the debtor or is solely derived from benefit payments under section 202 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402); or

(F) during the 5-year period preceding the filing of the petition (exclusive of any applicable suspension of the repayment period), was not enrolled in an education program and had a gross income that was less than 200 percent of the poverty line during each year during that period.

(b) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “poverty line” means the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) applicable to a household of the size involved.

(c) **85/15 RULE.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for fiscal years 2019 through

2028, no funds made available in this or any other appropriations Act shall be provided, directly or indirectly, to any proprietary institution of higher education (as defined in section 102(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(b))) that derives less than 15 percent of the institution’s revenue from sources other than Federal financial assistance provided under this or any other appropriations Act or any other Federal law, through a grant, contract, subsidy, loan, guarantee, insurance, or other means, including Federal financial assistance that is disbursed or delivered to an institution or on behalf of a student or to a student to be used to attend the institution, except that such assistance shall not include any monthly housing stipend provided under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code.

SA 3510. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VII of division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. The authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to regulate direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription drugs, pursuant to the authorities under sections 502(n) and 503C of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 352(n), 353c), shall include the authority to require such advertising to include an appropriate disclosure of pricing information with respect to such drugs.

SA 3511. Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 1 _____. (a) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall submit to Congress a report on the need for repair or replacement of bridges on public roads (including Tribal roads) that—

(1) have been rated as “poor” in the National Bridge Inventory pursuant to section 144 of title 23, United States Code;

(2) have features that do not meet applicable engineering standards for the present use of the bridges, if the entity with responsibility for repair or replacement of the applicable bridge, in responding to the Secretary under subsection (b), states that the bridge is prioritized for repair or replacement; or

(3) have structural elements the failure of which would cause the bridge or a portion of the bridge to collapse, if the entity with responsibility for repair or replacement of the applicable bridge, in responding to the Secretary under subsection (b), states that the bridge is prioritized for repair or replacement.

(b) In preparing the report under subsection (a), the Secretary shall solicit from State departments of transportation and

other entities with responsibility for the repair or replacement of bridges described in subsection (a) information on the readiness of those projects to commence construction and the cost of the project if Federal grant assistance was available to pay not less than 50 percent of the project costs eligible for assistance under title 23, United States Code, not including the proceeds from credit assistance under the TIFIA program (as defined in section 601(a) of that title).

(c) In preparing the report under subsection (a), a bridge shall be included only if the entity with responsibility for repair or replacement of the applicable bridge—

(1) responds to the solicitation made by the Secretary under subsection (b);

(2) identifies each bridge project or category of smaller bridge projects, consistent with subsection (d), that the entity requests to include in the report; and

(3) provides to the Secretary information necessary to complete the report, as described by the Secretary in the solicitation under subsection (b).

(d) In the report under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) identify—

(A) each bridge project with total eligible project costs greater than \$10,000,000; and

(B) categories of smaller bridge projects identified by responsible entities for other bridge projects;

(2) collect from entities with responsibility for repair or replacement of an applicable bridge—

(A) the timing and budget for each bridge project or category of smaller bridge projects as reported in the applicable transportation plans under sections 134 or 135 of title 23, United States Code; or

(B) an explanation from those entities as to why such projects or categories of smaller bridge projects are not included in those applicable transportation plans; and

(3) distinguish between urban and rural bridge projects and categories of smaller bridge projects identified by responsible entities.

SA 3512. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, line 4, strike “\$88,910,000” and insert “\$96,910,000”.

On page 40, line 7, strike “\$134,673,000” and insert “\$126,673,000”.

SA 3513. Mrs. FEINSTEIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 437, line 22, strike “133(b)(1)(A)” and insert “133(b)”.

On page 438, line 12, strike “133(b)(1)(A)” and insert “133(b)”.

On page 438, line 18, strike “133(b)(1)(A)” and insert “133(b)”.

On page 438, line 25, strike “133(b)(1)(A)” and insert “133(b)”.

SA 3514. Mrs. FEINSTEIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 414, line 24, strike the period and insert the following: “: *Provided further*, That in distributing funds made available under this heading, the Secretary shall ensure that each State receives not less than \$2 per capita, except in a case in which such a distribution would require the provision of funds to a project without an acceptable technical rating.”.

SA 3515. Mrs. FEINSTEIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 414, line 24, strike the period and insert the following: “: *Provided further*, That not less than 30 days before making grants with funds made available under this heading, the Secretary shall make publicly available a list of the merit-based technical ratings of the Department of Transportation for each application for a grant under this heading.”.

SA 3516. Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PROHIBITION.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 40A. Operation of unauthorized unmanned aircraft over wildfires

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), an individual who operates an unmanned aircraft and in so doing knowingly or recklessly interferes with a wildfire suppression, or law enforcement or emergency response efforts related to a wildfire suppression, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not less than 1 year, or both.

“(b) EXCEPTIONS.—This section does not apply to the operation of an unmanned aircraft conducted by a unit or agency of the United States Government or of a State, tribal, or local government (including any individual conducting such operation pursuant to a contract or other agreement entered into with the unit or agency) for the purpose of protecting the public safety and welfare, including firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response.

“(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions shall apply:

“(1) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term ‘unmanned aircraft’ has the meaning given the term in section 331 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

“(2) WILDFIRE.—The term ‘wildfire’ has the meaning given that term in section 2 of the Emergency Wildfire Suppression Act (42 U.S.C. 1856m).

“(3) WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION.—The term ‘wildfire suppression’ means an effort to contain, extinguish, or suppress a wildfire.”.

(b) TABLE OF SECTIONS AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 40 the following:

“40A. Operation of unauthorized unmanned aircraft over wildfires.”.

SA 3517. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 5, line 5, strike the period and insert the following: “: *Provided*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, \$2,000,000 shall be made available to carry out the Colorado River Basin salinity control program.”.

SA 3518. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division D, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . STOP DANGEROUS SANCTUARY CITIES ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act”.

(b) ENSURING THAT LOCAL AND FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS MAY COOPERATE TO SAFEGUARD OUR COMMUNITIES.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO COOPERATE WITH FEDERAL OFFICIALS.—A State, a political subdivision of a State, or an officer, employee, or agent of such State or political subdivision that complies with a detainer issued by the Department of Homeland Security under section 236 or 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1357)—

(A) shall be deemed to be acting as an agent of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(B) with regard to actions taken to comply with the detainer, shall have all authority available to officers and employees of the Department of Homeland Security.

(2) LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.—In any legal proceeding brought against a State, a political subdivision of a State, or an officer, employee, or agent of such State or political subdivision, which challenges the legality of the seizure or detention of an individual pursuant to a detainer issued by the Department of Homeland Security under section 236 or 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1357)—

(A) no liability shall lie against the State or political subdivision of a State for actions taken in compliance with the detainer; and

(B) if the actions of the officer, employee, or agent of the State or political subdivision were taken in compliance with the detainer—

(i) the officer, employee, or agent shall be deemed—

(I) to be an employee of the Federal Government and an investigative or law enforcement officer; and

(II) to have been acting within the scope of his or her employment under section 1346(b) and chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code;

(ii) section 1346(b) of title 28, United States Code, shall provide the exclusive remedy for the plaintiff; and

(iii) the United States shall be substituted as defendant in the proceeding.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to provide immunity to any person who knowingly violates the civil or constitutional rights of an individual.

(c) SANCTUARY JURISDICTION DEFINED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (2), for purposes of this section the term “sanctuary jurisdiction” means any State or political subdivision of a State that has in effect a statute, ordinance, policy, or practice that prohibits or restricts any government entity or official from—

(A) sending, receiving, maintaining, or exchanging with any Federal, State, or local government entity information regarding the citizenship or immigration status (lawful or unlawful) of any individual; or

(B) complying with a request lawfully made by the Department of Homeland Security under section 236 or 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1357) to comply with a detainer for, or notify about the release of, an individual.

(2) EXCEPTION.—A State or political subdivision of a State shall not be deemed a sanctuary jurisdiction based solely on its having a policy whereby its officials will not share information regarding, or comply with a request made by the Department of Homeland Security under section 236 or 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1357) to comply with a detainer regarding, an individual who comes forward as a victim or a witness to a criminal offense.

(d) SANCTUARY JURISDICTIONS INELIGIBLE FOR CERTAIN FEDERAL FUNDS.—

(1) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION GRANTS.—

(A) GRANTS FOR PUBLIC WORKS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.—Section 201(b) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3141(b)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) the area in which the project is to be carried out is not a sanctuary jurisdiction (as defined in subsection (c) of the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act).”.

(B) GRANTS FOR PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION.—Section 203(a) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3143(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “A sanctuary jurisdiction (as defined in subsection (c) of the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act) may not be deemed an eligible recipient under this subsection.”.

(C) SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS.—Section 205(a) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3145(a)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) will be carried out in an area that does not contain a sanctuary jurisdiction (as defined in subsection (c) of the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act).”.

(D) GRANTS FOR TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Section 207 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3147) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) INELIGIBILITY OF SANCTUARY JURISDICTIONS.—Grants funds under this section may not be used to provide assistance to a sanctuary jurisdiction (as defined in subsection (c) of the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act).”.

(2) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS.—Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 102(a) (42 U.S.C. 5302(a)), by adding at the end the following:

“(25) The term ‘sanctuary jurisdiction’ has the meaning provided in subsection (c) of the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act.”.

(B) in section 104 (42 U.S.C. 5304)—

(i) in subsection (b)—

(I) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(II) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7); and

(III) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following:

“(6) the grantee is not a sanctuary jurisdiction and will not become a sanctuary jurisdiction during the period for which the grantee receives a grant under this title; and”.

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(n) PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUALS AGAINST CRIME.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—No funds authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title may be obligated or expended for any State or unit of general local government that is a sanctuary jurisdiction.

“(2) RETURNED AMOUNTS.—

“(A) STATE.—If a State is a sanctuary jurisdiction during the period for which it receives amounts under this title, the Secretary—

“(i) shall direct the State to immediately return to the Secretary any such amounts that the State received for that period; and

“(ii) shall reallocate amounts returned under clause (i) for grants under this title to other States that are not sanctuary jurisdictions.

“(B) UNIT OF GENERAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—If a unit of general local government is a sanctuary jurisdiction during the period for which it receives amounts under this title, any such amounts that the unit of general local government received for that period—

“(i) in the case of a unit of general local government that is not in a nonentitlement area, shall be returned to the Secretary for grants under this title to States and other units of general local government that are not sanctuary jurisdictions; and

“(ii) in the case of a unit of general local government that is in a nonentitlement area, shall be returned to the Governor of the State for grants under this title to other units of general local government in the State that are not sanctuary jurisdictions.

“(C) REALLOCATION RULES.—In reallocating amounts under subparagraphs (A) and (B), the Secretary shall—

“(i) apply the relevant allocation formula under subsection (b), with all sanctuary jurisdictions excluded; and

“(ii) shall not be subject to the rules for reallocation under subsection (c).”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This subsection and the amendments made by this subsection shall take effect on October 1, 2018.

SA 3519. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making ap-

propriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 1. None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to administer, apply, or enforce requirements under subchapter IV of chapter 31 of part A of subtitle II of title 40, United States Code, or section 113 of title 23, United States Code, with respect to a project eligible under title 23, United States Code.

SA 3520. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out the final rule of the Department of Housing and Urban Development entitled “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” (80 Fed. Reg. 42272 (July 16, 2015)) or to carry out the notice of the Department of Housing and Urban Development entitled “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Assessment Tool” (79 Fed. Reg. 57949 (September 26, 2014)).

SA 3521. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in Division A, insert the following:

INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DEFERRED MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

SEC. 433. Notwithstanding any other provision of this division—

(1) the amount provided by the matter under the heading “LAND ACQUISITION” under the heading “BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT” under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR” in title I to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for Federal land acquisition shall be \$3,392,000;

(2) the amount provided by the matter under the heading “LAND ACQUISITION” under the heading “UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE” under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR” in title I to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for Federal land acquisition shall be \$11,953,000;

(3) the amount provided by the matter under the heading “OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM” under the heading “NATIONAL PARK SERVICE” under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR” in title I shall be increased by \$156,609,000, to be made available for deferred maintenance projects of the National Park Service;

(4) the amount provided by the matter under the heading “LAND ACQUISITION AND STATE ASSISTANCE” under the heading “NATIONAL PARK SERVICE” under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR” in title I to be derived from the Land and Water

Conservation Fund for Federal land acquisition shall be \$8,788,000; and

(5) the amount provided by the matter under the heading “LAND ACQUISITION (INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)” under the heading “FOREST SERVICE” under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE” under the heading “RELATED AGENCIES” in title III to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for Federal land acquisition shall be \$0.

SA 3522. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . None of the funds appropriated by this Act to the Food and Drug Administration shall be used to enforce standards of identity with respect to a food that would be considered adulterated or misbranded for the sole reason that the labeling of such food contains a common or usual name of another food, provided that the name of such other food on the label is preceded by a prominently displayed qualifying prefix, word, or phrase that identifies—

(1) an alternative plant or animal source that replaces some or all of the main characterizing ingredient or component of such other food; or

(2) the absence of a primary characterizing plant or animal source, or of a nutrient, allergen, or other well-known component, that is ordinarily present in such other food.

SA 3523. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . The final rule issued by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretary of the Army entitled “Clean Water Rule: Definition of ‘Waters of the United States’” (80 Fed. Reg. 37054 (June 29, 2015)) is repealed, and, until such time as the Administrator and the Secretary issue a final rule after the date of enactment of this Act that defines the scope of waters protected under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) and such new rule is in effect, any regulation or policy revised under, or otherwise affected as a result of, the rule repealed by this section shall be applied as if that repealed rule had not been issued.

SA 3524. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 324, line 13, strike the colon and insert “; and of which \$7,000,000 shall be available for marketing activities authorized

under section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1623(b)) to provide to State departments of agriculture, State cooperative extension services, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations grants to carry out programs and provide technical assistance to promote innovation, process improvement, and marketing relating to dairy products.”.

SA 3525. Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 411, line 19, strike “\$1,000,000,000” and insert “\$500,000,000”.

On page 460, line 14, strike “\$300,000,000” and insert “\$550,000,000”.

On page 463, line 10, strike “\$650,000,000” and insert “\$900,000,000”.

SA 3526. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title IV of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 4. The National Railroad Passenger Corporation shall grant a discount of not less than 15 percent on passenger fares to members of the public benefit corporation Veterans Advantage.

SA 3527. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. COONS, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 462, line 13, strike “Act.” and insert “Act: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, not less than \$150,000,000 shall be for projects for the implementation of positive train control: *Provided further*, That in making grants using the amounts set aside under the previous proviso, the Secretary shall give priority to projects relating to commuter rail operations.”.

SA 3528. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TREATMENT OF CERTAIN UNPOPULATED CENSUS TRACTS UNDER NEW MARKETS TAX CREDIT

SEC. _____. (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 45D(e)(4)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking “is within” and inserting “is—

“(i) within”,

(2) by striking “and” at the end and inserting “or”, and

(3) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(ii) a census tract with a population of zero, and”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to investments made after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3529. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title I of division D, insert the following after section 119F:

SEC. 119G. Of the funds provided under the heading “Grants-in-aid for Airports”, up to \$1,500,000 shall be for necessary expenses, including an independent verification regime, to provide reimbursement to airport sponsors that do not provide gateway operations and providers of general aviation ground support services located at airports within the 30-mile temporary flight restriction (TFR) area for any residence of the President that is designated or identified to be secured by the United States Secret Service, and for direct and incremental financial losses incurred while such operators or service providers are subject to operating restrictions solely due to the actions of the Federal Government: *Provided*, That no funds shall be obligated or distributed to airport sponsors that do not provide gateway operations and providers of general aviation ground support services until an independent audit is completed: *Provided further*, That losses incurred as a result of violations of law, or through fault or negligence, of such operators and service providers or of third parties (including airports) are not eligible for reimbursements: *Provided further*, That obligation and expenditure of funds are conditional upon full release of the United States Government for all claims for financial losses resulting from such actions: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall give priority to funding applicants with the most significant, documented financial losses due to these temporary flight restrictions: *Provided further*, That no funds shall be obligated or distributed under this section to such operators or service providers that received reimbursement under section 119F.

SA 3530. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 16, line 10, strike “\$2,500,369,000” and insert “\$2,501,312,000”.

On page 16, line 18, strike the period and insert the following: “: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this

heading, \$3,051,000 shall be made available for the Partnership Wild and Scenic River Program.”.

On page 24, line 1, strike “\$179,266,000” and insert “\$178,323,000”.

On page 24, line 19, strike the period and insert the following: “: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, \$60,856,000 shall be made available for conventional energy activities.”.

SA 3531. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 16, line 10, strike “\$2,500,369,000” and insert “\$2,501,312,000”.

On page 16, line 18, strike the period and insert the following: “: *Provided further*, That of the amounts made available under this heading, \$3,051,000 shall be made available for the Partnership Wild and Scenic River Program.”.

On page 40, line 7, strike “\$134,673,000” and insert “\$133,730,000”.

SA 3532. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 253, strike lines 20 through 25.

SA 3533. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 142, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

PROHIBITION OF OIL AND GAS LEASING IN CERTAIN AREAS OF THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF

SEC. 433. Section 8 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(q) PROHIBITION OF OIL AND GAS LEASING IN CERTAIN AREAS OF THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section or any other law, the Secretary of the Interior shall not issue a lease or any other authorization for the exploration, development, or production of oil, natural gas, or any other mineral in—

“(1) the Mid-Atlantic planning area;

“(2) the South Atlantic planning area;

“(3) the North Atlantic planning area; or

“(4) the Straits of Florida planning area.”.

SA 3534. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related

agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ Section 414(b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11373(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) MINIMUM ALLOCATION REQUIREMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If, under the allocation provisions applicable under this subtitle, a metropolitan city or an urban county would receive a grant of less than .05 percent of the amounts appropriated under section 408 and made available to carry out this subtitle for any fiscal year, such amount shall be—

“(A) in the case of the metropolitan city—

“(i) reallocated to the urban county in which the metropolitan city is located, if the urban county—

“(I) has previously received and administered assistance under this section; and

“(II) agrees to receive such amount; or

“(ii) if the urban county in which the metropolitan city is located does not meet the requirements under subclauses (I) and (II) of clause (i), reallocated to the State in which the metropolitan city is located; and

“(B) in the case of the urban county—

“(i) provided to the urban county, if the urban county has previously received and administered assistance under this section; or

“(ii) if the urban county has not previously received and administered assistance under this section, reallocated to the State in which the urban county is located.

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

“(A) METROPOLITAN CITIES.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(A), the grant amount described in paragraph (1) with respect to a metropolitan city shall be provided to the metropolitan city if the metropolitan city—

“(i) is located in a State that does not have counties as local governments;

“(ii) has a population greater than 40,000 but less than 50,000 as used in determining the fiscal year 1987 community development block grant program allocation; and

“(iii) was allocated in excess of \$1,000,000 in community development block grant funds in fiscal year 1987.

“(B) REALLOCATION TO THE STATE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), any amount allocated to an urban county or metropolitan city under this subtitle shall be reallocated to the State in which the urban county or metropolitan city is located if the amount determined under clause (ii) for a fiscal year is less than .05 percent of the amounts appropriated under section 408 and made available to carry out this subtitle for that fiscal year.

“(ii) AMOUNT.—The amount determined under this clause is equal to the sum of—

“(I) the grant that each metropolitan city located within an urban county would receive under the allocation provisions applicable under this subtitle, in the aggregate; and

“(II) the grant that the urban county would receive under the allocation provisions applicable under this subtitle.

“(3) AMOUNTS REALLOCATED TO URBAN COUNTIES.—An urban county that receives amounts reallocated under paragraph (1)(A)(i) may expend those amounts for the benefit of metropolitan cities located in the urban county.”.

SA 3535. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related

agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 413, line 19, insert “*Provided further*, That not less than 50 percent of the funds provided under this heading shall be for projects located in urban areas:” after “percent:”.

SA 3536. Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3399 proposed by Mr. SHELBY to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. ____ **FIGHTING ILLICIT NETWORKS AND DETECTING TRAFFICKING.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Fight Illicit Networks and Detect Trafficking Act” or the “FIND Trafficking Act”.

(b) **GAO STUDY.**—

(1) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on how virtual currencies and online marketplaces are used to facilitate sex and drug trafficking that considers—

(A) how online marketplaces, including the dark web, are being used as platforms to buy, sell, or facilitate the financing of goods or services associated with sex trafficking or drug trafficking (specifically, opioids and synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, fentanyl analogs, and any precursor chemicals associated with manufacturing fentanyl or fentanyl analogs) destined for, originating from, or within the United States;

(B) how financial payment methods, including virtual currencies and peer-to-peer mobile payment services, are being utilized by online marketplaces to facilitate the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking destined for, originating from, or within the United States;

(C) how virtual currencies are being used to facilitate the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking, destined for, originating from, or within the United States, when an online platform is not otherwise involved;

(D) how illicit funds that have been transmitted online and through virtual currencies are repatriated into the formal banking system of the United States through money laundering or other means;

(E) the participants (state and nonstate actors) throughout the entire supply chain that participate in or benefit from the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking (either through online marketplaces or virtual currencies) destined for, originating from, or within the United States;

(F) Federal and State agency efforts to impede the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking destined for, originating from, or within the United States, including efforts to prevent the proceeds from sex or drug trafficking from entering the United States banking system;

(G) how virtual currencies and their underlying technologies can be used to detect and deter these illicit activities; and

(H) to what extent can the immutable and traceable nature of virtual currencies con-

tribute to the tracking and prosecution of illicit funding.

(2) **SCOPE.**—In paragraph (1), the term “sex trafficking” means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act that is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.

(c) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives that—

(1) summarizes the results of the study required under subsection (b); and

(2) contains any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that would improve the efforts of Federal agencies to impede the use of virtual currencies and online marketplaces in facilitating sex and drug trafficking.

SA 3537. Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION” under the heading “OPERATIONS” under the heading “(AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND)” in title I of division D, strike “airport,” and insert “airport: *Provided further*, That of the amount appropriated under this heading, up to \$6,000,000 shall be used for providing matching funds to qualified commercial entities seeking to demonstrate or validate technologies that the Federal Aviation Administration considers essential to the safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in the National Airspace System at Federal Aviation Administration designated UAS test sites: *Provided further*, That not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall identify essential integration technologies that could be demonstrated or validated at test sites designated in accordance with the preceding proviso.”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

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

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

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Dan Michael Berkovitz, of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of

the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and James E. Hubbard, of Colorado, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment.

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 Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Elad L. Roisman, of Maine, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Michael R. Bright, of the District of Columbia, to be President, Government National Mortgage Association, and Rae Oliver, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, both of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Dino Falaschetti, of Montana, to be Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Teri L. Donaldson, of Texas, to be Inspector General, Karen S. Evans, of West Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response), Christopher Fall, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Science, and Daniel Simmons, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy), all of the Department of Energy;

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OCEANS, ATMOSPHERE, FISHERIES, AND COAST GUARD

The Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "NOAA's Blue Economy Initiative: Supporting Commerce in American Oceans and Great Lakes."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, PRODUCT SAFETY, INSURANCE, AND DATA SECURITY

The Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hear-

ing entitled "Strengthening and Empowering U.S. Amateur Athletes: Moving Forward with Solutions."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC, AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY

The Subcommittee on East Asia, The Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "The China Challenge, Part 1: Economic Coercion as Statecraft."

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Bob Ross, a detailee from the Department of Agriculture; Ramsay Eyre, an intern at the Appropriations Committee; and Olivia Harris, an intern in my personal office, be granted floor privileges for the length of the current debate on H.R. 6147, an act making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 589, S. Res. 590, and S. Res. 591.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

HONORING THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION ON THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGENCY

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 578.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 578) honoring the men and women of the Drug Enforcement Admin-

istration on the 45th anniversary of the agency.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. ROUNDS. 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.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 578) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of July 18, 2018, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADEMARKS AND THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF THE NATIONAL TRADEMARK EXPOSITION OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 580.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 580) recognizing and supporting public awareness of the importance of trademarks and the goals and ideals of the National Trademark Exposition of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. ROUNDS. 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.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 580) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of July 18, 2018, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

STATE OFFICES OF RURAL HEALTH REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 344, S. 2278.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2278) to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide grants to improve health care in rural areas.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee

on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is shown in *italic*.)

S. 2278

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 “State Offices of Rural Health Reauthorization Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. STATE OFFICES OF RURAL HEALTH.

Section 338J of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254r) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 338J. GRANTS TO STATE OFFICES OF RURAL HEALTH.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (established under section 711 of the Social Security Act), shall make grants to each State Office of Rural Health for the purpose of improving health care in rural areas.

“(b) REQUIREMENT OF MATCHING FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless the State office of rural health involved agrees, with respect to the costs to be incurred in carrying out the purpose described in such subsection, to provide non-Federal contributions toward such costs in an amount equal to \$3 for each \$1 of Federal funds provided in the grant.

“(2) WAIVER OR REDUCTION.—The Secretary may waive or reduce the non-Federal contribution if the Secretary determines that requiring matching funds would limit the State office of rural health’s ability to carry out the purpose described in subsection (a).

“(3) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT OF NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION.—Non-Federal contributions required in paragraph (1) may be in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including plant, equipment, or services. Amounts provided by the Federal Government, or services assisted or subsidized to any significant extent by the Federal Government, may not be included in determining the amount of such non-Federal contributions.

“(c) CERTAIN REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—Recipients of a grant under subsection (a) shall use the grant funds for purposes of—

“(1) maintaining within the State office of rural health a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information on—

“(A) rural health care issues;

“(B) research findings relating to rural health care; and

“(C) innovative approaches to the delivery of health care in rural areas;

“(2) coordinating the activities carried out in the State that relate to rural health care, including providing coordination for the purpose of avoiding redundancy in such activities; and

“(3) identifying Federal and State programs regarding rural health, and providing technical assistance to public and nonprofit private entities regarding participation in such programs.

“(d) REQUIREMENT REGARDING ANNUAL BUDGET FOR OFFICE.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless the State involved agrees that, for any fiscal year for which the State office of rural health receives such a grant, the office operated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section will be provided with an annual budget of not less than \$150,000.

“(e) CERTAIN USES OF FUNDS.—

“(1) RESTRICTIONS.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless

the State office of rural health involved agrees that the grant will not be expended—

“(A) to provide health care (including providing cash payments regarding such care);

“(B) to conduct activities for which Federal funds are expended—

“(i) within the State to provide technical and other nonfinancial assistance under section 330A(f);

“(ii) under a memorandum of agreement entered into with the State office of rural health under section 330A(h); or

“(iii) under a grant under section 338I;

“(C) to purchase medical equipment, to purchase ambulances, aircraft, or other vehicles, or to purchase major communications equipment;

“(D) to purchase or improve real property; or

“(E) to carry out any activity regarding a certificate of need.

“(2) AUTHORITIES.—Activities for which a State office of rural health may expend a grant under subsection (a) include—

“(A) paying the costs of maintaining an office of rural health for purposes of subsection (a);

“(B) subject to paragraph (1)(B)(iii), paying the costs of any activity carried out with respect to recruiting and retaining health professionals to serve in rural areas of the State; and

“(C) providing grants and contracts to public and nonprofit private entities to carry out activities authorized in this section.

“(3) LIMIT ON INDIRECT COSTS.—The Secretary may impose a limit of no more than 15 percent on indirect costs claimed by the recipient of the grant.

“(f) REPORTS.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless the State office of rural health involved agrees—

“(1) to submit to the Secretary reports or performance data containing such information as the Secretary may require regarding activities carried out under this section; and

“(2) to submit such a report or performance data not later than September 30 of each fiscal year immediately following any fiscal year for which the State office of rural health has received such a grant.

“(g) REQUIREMENT OF APPLICATION.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless an application for the grant is submitted to the Secretary and the application is in such form, is made in such manner, and contains such agreements, assurances, and information as the Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out such subsection.

“(h) NONCOMPLIANCE.—The Secretary may not make payments under subsection (a) to a State office of rural health for any fiscal year subsequent to the first fiscal year of such payments unless the Secretary determines that, for the immediately preceding fiscal year, the State office of rural health has complied with each of the agreements made by the State office of rural health under this section.

“(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of making grants under subsection (a), there are authorized to be appropriated [such sums as may be necessary] \$12,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022.

“(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.”.

Mr. ROUNDS. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 2278), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2278

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 “State Offices of Rural Health Reauthorization Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. STATE OFFICES OF RURAL HEALTH.

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“(b) REQUIREMENT OF MATCHING FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless the State office of rural health involved agrees, with respect to the costs to be incurred in carrying out the purpose described in such subsection, to provide non-Federal contributions toward such costs in an amount equal to \$3 for each \$1 of Federal funds provided in the grant.

“(2) WAIVER OR REDUCTION.—The Secretary may waive or reduce the non-Federal contribution if the Secretary determines that requiring matching funds would limit the State office of rural health’s ability to carry out the purpose described in subsection (a).

“(3) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT OF NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION.—Non-Federal contributions required in paragraph (1) may be in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including plant, equipment, or services. Amounts provided by the Federal Government, or services assisted or subsidized to any significant extent by the Federal Government, may not be included in determining the amount of such non-Federal contributions.

“(c) CERTAIN REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—Recipients of a grant under subsection (a) shall use the grant funds for purposes of—

“(1) maintaining within the State office of rural health a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information on—

“(A) rural health care issues;

“(B) research findings relating to rural health care; and

“(C) innovative approaches to the delivery of health care in rural areas;

“(2) coordinating the activities carried out in the State that relate to rural health care, including providing coordination for the purpose of avoiding redundancy in such activities; and

“(3) identifying Federal and State programs regarding rural health, and providing technical assistance to public and nonprofit private entities regarding participation in such programs.

“(d) REQUIREMENT REGARDING ANNUAL BUDGET FOR OFFICE.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless the State involved agrees that, for any fiscal year for which the State office of rural health receives such a grant, the office operated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section will be provided with an annual budget of not less than \$150,000.

“(e) CERTAIN USES OF FUNDS.—

“(1) RESTRICTIONS.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless

the State office of rural health involved agrees that the grant will not be expended—

“(A) to provide health care (including providing cash payments regarding such care);

“(B) to conduct activities for which Federal funds are expended—

“(i) within the State to provide technical and other nonfinancial assistance under section 330A(f);

“(ii) under a memorandum of agreement entered into with the State office of rural health under section 330A(h); or

“(iii) under a grant under section 338I;

“(C) to purchase medical equipment, to purchase ambulances, aircraft, or other vehicles, or to purchase major communications equipment;

“(D) to purchase or improve real property; or

“(E) to carry out any activity regarding a certificate of need.

“(2) AUTHORITIES.—Activities for which a State office of rural health may expend a grant under subsection (a) include—

“(A) paying the costs of maintaining an office of rural health for purposes of subsection (a);

“(B) subject to paragraph (1)(B)(iii), paying the costs of any activity carried out with respect to recruiting and retaining health professionals to serve in rural areas of the State; and

“(C) providing grants and contracts to public and nonprofit private entities to carry out activities authorized in this section.

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“(f) REPORTS.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless the State office of rural health involved agrees—

“(1) to submit to the Secretary reports or performance data containing such information as the Secretary may require regarding activities carried out under this section; and

“(2) to submit such a report or performance data not later than September 30 of each fiscal year immediately following any fiscal year for which the State office of rural health has received such a grant.

“(g) REQUIREMENT OF APPLICATION.—The Secretary may not make a grant under subsection (a) unless an application for the grant is submitted to the Secretary and the application is in such form, is made in such manner, and contains such agreements, assurances, and information as the Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out such subsection.

“(h) NONCOMPLIANCE.—The Secretary may not make payments under subsection (a) to a

State office of rural health for any fiscal year subsequent to the first fiscal year of such payments unless the Secretary determines that, for the immediately preceding fiscal year, the State office of rural health has complied with each of the agreements made by the State office of rural health under this section.

“(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of making grants under subsection (a), there are authorized to be appropriated \$12,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022.

“(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.”.

Mr. ROUNDS. 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. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to call up the following amendments to amendment No. 3399: Moran No. 3433, Udall No. 3414. I further ask consent that at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 25, the Senate vote in relation to the Moran and Udall amendments in the order listed and that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendments prior to the votes.

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

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2018

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, July 25; 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 resume consideration of H.R. 6147.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DAINES. 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 8:20 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

J. NICHOLAS RANJAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE KIM R. GIBSON, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

TAMARA BONZANTO, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION), VICE DONALD P. LOREN, RESIGNING.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate July 24, 2018:

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

BRUCE LANDSBERG, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2022.

JENNIFER L. HOMENDY, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2019.

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on July 24, 2018 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

RYAN WESLEY BOUNDS, OF OREGON, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT, VICE DIARMUID F. O'SCANNLAIN, RETIRED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 8, 2018.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ON THE DEPARTURE OF ETHAN LAUER, DEPUTY PARLIAMENTARIAN

HON. PAUL D. RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, rise to commend Ethan Lauer on his exemplary service to the people's House.

Ethan, who began here in 1999 as an Assistant Parliamentarian, has served as the Deputy Parliamentarian since 2012. While his departure is certainly bittersweet, I am pleased to note that he is returning to our shared home state of Wisconsin for a position serving the Wisconsin State Assembly.

Ethan has been a tremendous asset to the House, from his encyclopedic knowledge of rules and procedures, to his drafting and interpretation skills, which have been invaluable during procedural challenges. Our presiding officers, in particular, have come to rely on Ethan's ability to quickly and clearly navigate a parliamentary situation.

Given its importance to members, Ethan's role in publishing the precedents of the House merits special mention. He has served as the Managing Editor of the House Rules and Manual since 2007. In addition, he has worked on three volumes of House Practice and three volumes of precedents.

Over the years, Ethan has always brought an unbreakable demeanor and positive spirit to his duties. He has that rare combination of endless patience and extraordinary dedication that has made him essential to keeping this institution functioning. His record of public service is one to which every Parliamentarian and House employee should aspire.

On behalf of the whole House, I thank Ethan for his service and wish his wife, Erin, and their children Anna and Sadie, well as they return to the Badger State.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, July 18, 2018, I am wrongly recorded on Roll Call 354. I intended to support House Amendment 925 to H.R. 6147, the Interior, Environment, Financial Services, and General Government Appropriations Act of 2019.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PRAMILA JAYAPAL

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for roll call vote 366 and 367 on Mon-

day, July 23, 2018 I would have voted 'aye' on both.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, on July 23, 2018, I was unavoidably detained and missed recorded votes No. 366 through 367. Had I been present: on Roll Call No. 366, H.R. 2345, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act, I would have voted Yea; on Roll Call No. 367, H.R. 4881, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, the Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act, I would have voted Yea.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE HONORABLE LEROY R. JOHNSON

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend a prominent attorney, exemplary civil rights leader, former Georgia State Senator, mentor to many, and a man whose life has truly impacted the world, the Honorable Leroy Reginald Johnson. Senator Johnson will be celebrating his 90th birthday with family and friends on July 28, 2018 at the Georgian Terrace Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia.

Leroy Reginald Johnson was born on July 28, 1928 in Atlanta, Georgia. He graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in 1945. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Morehouse College in 1949 and a master's degree from Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) in 1951. From 1950 to 1954, Senator Johnson taught social science in the Atlanta school system. He then enrolled in law school at North Carolina Central University, earning his law degree in 1957.

Following his graduation from law school, Fulton County hired him as a criminal investigator, the first African American to be hired by the solicitor general's office (now the District Attorney's office). As the Civil Rights Movement ramped up, he became involved in demonstrations and protests. When black college students conducted mass sit-ins at Rich's Department Store lunch counters in October 1960, he was present as one of the several community leaders advising the students, who included Julian Bond.

In 1962, he was elected to the Georgia State Senate, making him the first African American to be elected to the Georgia General Assembly since the end of the Reconstruction era. He was also the first African

American elected to public office in the Southeast United States that year. In the beginning, Senator Johnson faced many obstacles due to segregation but rose above the adversity, becoming an influential lawmaker and attaining the position of Chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

All the while, Senator Johnson maintained a successful law practice. He was the driving force in getting the legendary Muhammad Ali's boxing license reinstated in 1970. Ali had been stripped of his boxing license in the prime of his career due to his opposition to the Vietnam War. After big cities across the country refused to host a match in which Ali would participate, Senator Johnson offered Atlanta as a location where the fight could take place. Senator Johnson fought behind the scenes to get state and local officials to agree so that ultimately, Muhammad Ali could fight inside the ring in a match that would lead the way for Ali to eventually reclaim the heavyweight crown.

Over the years, Senator Johnson received many awards and accolades for his legal, political, and civic work. In 1996, his portrait was hung on the third floor of the State Capitol near the Senate chamber where he served for twelve years. In 2000, the Georgia State Senate passed a resolution renaming a portion of Fulton Industrial Boulevard as Leroy Johnson-Fulton Industrial Boulevard. In 2016, he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the State Bar of Georgia and the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism for his untiring commitment to volunteer participation in the community throughout his legal career. Senator Johnson has accomplished much in his life but none of this would be possible without the love and support of his wife, Cleopatra, and son, Michael Vince.

On a personal note, I have had the great pleasure of knowing Senator Johnson since high school in 1964 when he spoke in Montgomery, Alabama at the Alabama State Association of Student Councils' meeting where I was presiding as State Student Council President. He was a schoolmate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Washington High School and at Morehouse College. Like Dr. King he was influenced greatly by Dr. Benjamin E. Mays to use his life to make a difference for humanity. I was inspired by this successful lawyer and public official and was motivated to emulate his career path. I attended Morehouse College, became a civil rights lawyer, and twelve years after meeting him, I was elected to the Georgia State House and 14 years later to the State Senate and in 1992 to the U.S. Congress. I have truly been blessed by Senator Johnson's friendship, counsel, and mentorship throughout the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House to join my wife Vivian and me, along with the people of the state of Georgia, in recognizing and commending former State Senator Leroy Johnson for his outstanding professional achievements and service. Moreover, we extend our best wishes to him as he, his family, and friends celebrate his 90th birthday.

• 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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, July 23, 2018, I am not recorded on one vote because I was unavoidably detained due to weather impacting my commercial flight.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yes on Roll Call 336.

**AGOA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF
SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL
TRADE RELATIONS WITH AFRICA**

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the privilege of attending the annual forum on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), where we focused on forging new strategies for U.S.-Africa trade and investment. It was an honor meeting with African leaders to continue the discussion on how we can continue to develop trade between the United States and sub-Saharan Africa.

I want to thank all of the Members of Congress who have worked together to support and maintain the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Since the legislation's passage in 2000, the strong bipartisan support that AGOA has received is proof of our nation's commitment to expanding global markets for U.S. goods and services. It shows that at our core, despite President Trump's protectionist views on trade and recent attacks on our allies, we as Americans value any opportunity to strengthen international relations and develop strong democracies.

Trade with Africa has greatly benefited the United States and Africa. By allowing duty-free access to the U.S. market for exports from 40 sub-Saharan countries, AGOA offers African countries tangible incentives to continue their efforts in opening their economies, while also reinforcing internationally recognized human rights. While exporting \$13.8 billion in goods to the United States under the act in 2017, AGOA nations also continued to make efforts to enact policies that observe the rule of law, political pluralism, and the right to due process, fighting poverty and corruption along the way. As a member of the Ways and Means committee, and as a representative of the state of Alabama, whose economy is highly dependent on trade, I will continue to be supportive of AGOA because it promotes investment and strengthens our global economy.

I applaud both American and African government officials, the private sector, and the people of the AGOA nations for working so hard to maximize the benefits of AGOA. I encourage us to continue working together to enhance our commitment to Africa.

**RECOGNIZING OSS VETERAN
HOWARD POLLARI**

HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Howard Pollari, a World War II veteran of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), and a resident of Illinois's Tenth District.

The OSS was a wartime intelligence agency, and precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), that played an integral part in our military and intelligence operations during World War II. Members of the service trained, supplied, and fought alongside resistance organizations throughout Europe and Asia as they battled against the Axis Powers.

For two and a half years, Mr. Pollari committed his life to the service of our country. Beginning in 1944, he participated in five "Carpetbagger" operations as part of the 857th Bomb Squadron of the OSS delivering much-needed supplies to resistance fighters and allies in Nazi-occupied Norway. These dangerous stealth missions were typically flown on moonlit nights and at low level to avoid enemy detection.

Mr. Pollari's role as a flight engineer was vital to the success and survival of these missions, as he was responsible for making in-flight repairs to the B-24 aircrafts during the airdrop missions.

Mr. Pollari was one of more than 13,000 individuals employed by the OSS at the war's peak. Today, fewer than 100 former OSS members remain alive, and for too long their service and sacrifice was not properly recognized.

Earlier this year, Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor, to those who served in the OSS in recognition of their heroic and pioneering service to our country.

It is my great honor and privilege to recognize Howard Pollari on behalf of a grateful nation for his service to our country and allies during World War II. I look forward to presenting him and his family with a copy of the Congressional Gold Medal in person this August.

**TRIBUTE TO MALL CHANEY ON
HER 75TH BIRTHDAY**

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a person of great merit on the occasion of her 75th birthday. It is often stated that the United States is great because it is a nation of immigrants. Mr. Speaker, I would agree with this statement with the addition of the word legal in front of immigrants. Mall Chaney is an example of such a person who worked within the law to become a citizen of the United States. I understand that it is not an easy task.

Mall was born in Estonia in 1943 in the middle of World War II. At that time Estonia was in peril at the hands of Russia as well as Ger-

many. However, it was her parents' concern about Russia that caused them to flee. Russia had seized her mother's brother and sent him to Siberia never to be heard from again. As a professional chemist, Mall's father feared being pressed into Russia's weapons development program or much worse.

When Mall was about six months old the family consisting of her mother, father, and sister fled under cover of night with basically nothing but the clothes on their backs. The family spent several years in a Swedish refugee camp and then in the general population of Sweden. In 1951 Mall and her family were sponsored by a family friend from Canada and were able to migrate to Canada.

Mall lived in Canada until she married John Chaney, a resident of Florida, in 1982. Mall became a U.S. citizen and has paid homage to the United States by respecting our laws, becoming a respected and loved member of the community, the state of Florida, and the country.

Happy Birthday Mall, and best wishes.

SUMMER INTERN ELIJAH ALLISON**HON. KEN BUCK**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Elijah Allison for his hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Fourth District as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office for the summer of 2018.

The work of this young man has been exemplary, and I know he has a bright future. He served as a tour guide, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity, and look forward to seeing him build his career in public service.

Elijah plans to continue working in public service after this internship. I wish him the best as he pursues his career path. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Elijah Allison for his service the last several months to the people of Colorado's 4th District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for Roll Call votes 366 and 367 on Monday, July 23, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yea."

**JOBS AND INVESTOR CONFIDENCE
ACT OF 2018**

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, S. 488 would not have been possible

without the hard work of staff. I thank them for their efforts and include in the RECORD the following names:

Katelynn Bradley, Kris Erickson, Eric Hersey, Bruce Johnson, Erika Jeffers, Erica Loewe, Esther Kahng, Marcos Manosalvas, Charla Ouertatani, Lisa Peto, Courtney Robinson, Glen Sears, Katy Strohmeier.

HONORING TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE NCAA MEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Javelinas on their 2018 NCAA Division II Men's Outdoor Track and Field National Championship.

The Javelinas capped off an impressive season as National Champions on May 26, 2018 thanks to the enduring dedication and leadership of head coach Ryan Dall and the entire coaching staff. During the highly competitive national meet of 113 total teams, the Javelinas scored 65 points and won four individual National Champion titles.

I want to congratulate the athletes. Charles Greaves secured a critical first place finish in the triple jump event for the Javelinas, and joined Deon Hope, Javier Lopez and Todd Nicholas in their first place win in the 4 x 100 meter relay race. Senior Javier Lopez claimed back-to-back titles in the 100 meter hurdles in his last event as a Javelina. Richard Cervantes impressively finished first overall after trailing behind in 15th place in the shot put event. I am very proud of the hard work and perseverance these gentlemen demonstrated on the national stage.

The National Championship team was comprised of: Joshua Adame, Seth Barker, Marckenley Betony, Jamarkus Birks, Raymond Borjon, Jesus Caballero, Richard Cervantes, Johnnie Davila, Robert Downs, Damian Feeney, Kentwan Freeman, Hilario Garcia, Charles Greaves, Daniel Guerrero, Miguel Hanze, Johnathon Harper, Drew Hill, Deon Hope, Arturo Huerta, Kenneth Jackson, Lane Janecka, Sean Landez, Javier Lopez, Elias Madrid, Ricky Medrano, Lane Michna, Todd Nicholas, Jasiah Patterson, Andrew Perez, Supun Randeniya, Jorge Rios, Francisco Solis, Shane Stehle, Juan Suarez, Joseph Swierc, Jose Ventura IV, Dean Wallace, Christopher Williams, Brandon Wilson, Ayman Zahafi, Kenny Zamorano, and Vitaly Zhgun. The coaching staff included: Ryan Dall, Tim Miller, Aared Sampson, and Amber Perry.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the great accomplishment of the Texas A&M-Kingsville Javelinas. As their Representative in Congress, I am very proud of all their hard work and commitment that resulted in this exceptional achievement.

SUMMER INTERN ANGEL CALDWELL

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Angel Caldwell for her hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Fourth District as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office for the summer of 2018.

The work of this young woman has been exemplary, and I know she has a bright future. She served as a tour guide, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity, and look forward to seeing her build her career in public service.

Angel plans to continue pursuing her degree at Virginia Union University at the end of this internship. I wish her the best as she pursues her career path. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Angel Caldwell for her service the last several months to the people of Colorado's 4th District.

RECOGNIZING THE CITI OPEN TENNIS TOURNAMENT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to recognize the Citi Open Tennis Tournament, taking place July 28 through August 5, 2018, in Rock Creek Park, on its 50th edition in the District of Columbia. This tournament is not only a Washington tennis tradition, but also an economic staple in the region.

The Washington tennis tournament, now known as the Citi Open Tennis Tournament, was founded in 1969 by tennis legend and Hall of Famer Donald Dell and his business partner John Harris with the support of Arthur Ashe, the first African American to win both the U.S. Open and Wimbledon tournaments. Ashe declared he would participate in the inaugural tournament under two conditions: that the tournament would take place in a naturally integrated neighborhood, and that it would be played on public land where all people could come together, enjoy the sport and share the experience. Today, the tournament remains at its original location, 16th & Kennedy Streets NW, in Rock Creek Park.

In 1972, Dell gifted the tournament to the Washington Tennis & Education Foundation (then called the Washington Area Tennis Patrons), a nonprofit organization supporting local education causes for over 1,500 low-income and underserved children in the District.

The Citi Open Tennis Tournament draws the best players in the world, making D.C. a global tennis destination. The tournament is also seen on television in over 140 countries, contributing to the city's reputation as a tourist destination. Recent economic impact studies found that the estimated total gross impact of the Citi Open Tennis Tournament on the regional economy exceeds \$25 million annually. The tournament is the only Association of

Tennis Professionals 500 level event in the United States and one of only four professional tennis tournaments combining men's and women's events. It is also recognized as an international level tournament by the Women's Tennis Association.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the tournament's 50th edition by celebrating "Tennis Week in the District of Columbia," commemorated July 28 through August 5, 2018, as well as acknowledging the Washington Tennis & Education Foundation for a world-class sporting event and contributions raised for D.C. youth.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent on July 23, 2018 and missed Roll Call Votes 366 and 367. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on both roll calls.

TRIBUTE TO PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE SAGINAW COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ROBERT VAN DEVENTER

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Van Deventer, the President and CEO of the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce, upon his retirement.

During his more than fifteen years with the Saginaw County Chamber, Bob has been a recognized community leader and a leading advocate for enhancing the Great Lakes Bay Region. In fact, numerous non-profit organizations have recruited Bob to serve as an advisor and have sought his expertise; Bob has served on the Great Lakes Bay Regional Branding and Communications Council, Saginaw County Business and Education Partnership, the Great Lakes Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau, Saginaw Future, Inc., the SVSU College of Business and Management Advisory Board and the CMU Alumni Advisory Board of Directors just to list a few.

Bob also served as President and member of the Board of Directors for the Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance. Under his leadership, Bob increased communication and joint ventures amongst Bay, Isabella, Midland and Saginaw counties. At a time when the City of Saginaw was about to close the doors on the Saginaw Civic Center, Bob along with the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce, led a successful campaign to restore and upgrade the building into what is now the Dow Event Center. This advancement set in motion the campaign to redevelop the deteriorating downtown Saginaw. Bob and the Alliance have been able to enhance our local communities by drawing tourism to the Great Lakes Bay Region.

Throughout Bob's illustrious career with the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce, he

truly embodied its mission and vision. From supporting the success of local businesses to building healthy organizations and community through his volunteerism, Bob has dedicated his efforts to revitalizing Saginaw County and creating an exceptional place to live and work.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Michigan, I am honored today to recognize Robert Van Deventer upon his retirement from the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce and extend my appreciation for his commitment to Saginaw and the Great Lakes Bay Region.

SUMMER INTERN LIAM MULLETT

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Liam Mullett for his hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Fourth District as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office for the summer of 2018.

The work of this young man has been exemplary, and I know he has a bright future. He served as a tour guide, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity, and look forward to seeing him build his career in public service.

Liam plans to continue pursuing his degree at Princeton at the end of this internship. I wish him the best as he pursues his career path. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Liam Mullett for his service the last several months to the people of Colorado's 4th District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on July 18, 2018 during Roll Call No. 345, I was inadvertently recorded as voting "aye." I support the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and my vote should be recorded as "no." The NEA and NEH are essential because they support and strengthen our great country's rich and diverse cultural heritage and history. These organizations promote excellence across all of America's communities and deserve Congress' unwavering support. I look forward to supporting the NEA and the NEH in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. CAROLYN G. RANDOLPH

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work and service of a dedicated educator, woman of grace, and

servant to all mankind, Mrs. Carolyn G. Randolph. Mrs. Randolph, Life Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., has been elected to serve as the South Atlantic Regional Director, reflecting her distinguished leadership in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. A luncheon honoring her will be held on Saturday, July 28, 2018 at 1 p.m. at the Green Island Country Club in Columbus, Georgia.

A native of Columbus, Georgia, Carolyn received a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Mathematics from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a Master of Science degree from North Carolina A&T State University, and an Education Specialist degree from Columbus State University.

Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Through every stage of her life, Mrs. Randolph has always given of herself to others. She served as an educator for many years before retiring and today, she serves as a Clinical Supervisor for the Mathematics Woodrow Wilson Fellows and an adjunct instructor at Columbus State University.

Carolyn's service also extends into her church life at Fourth Street Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia where she is an active member. A dedicated servant of God, she has served in the Deacon's Wives, Christian Education, Pastoral Relations, and Men's and Women's Ministries.

Carolyn was first initiated in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. through the Alpha Psi Omega Chapter in Wilmington, North Carolina, the first Greek letter organization among African-American women in Southeastern North Carolina. She is currently a member of the Gamma Tau Omega Chapter in Columbus, Georgia where she has served as President (two terms), First Vice President, Second Vice President, House Treasurer, Chaplain, Chair of the Connections Committee, a member of the Graduate Advisors Council, former Chair of the Scholarship Committee, and first President of the chapter's foundation, S.I.S.T.E.R.S., Inc.

She has diligently served at the local, regional, and international levels within Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and was recently awarded the 2018 Georgia Legislative Women's Caucus Servant Leadership Award, which was presented by Georgia State Representative Carolyn Hugley (District 136) during Women's History Month.

Mrs. Randolph has accomplished many things in her life but none of these would have been possible without the enduring love and support of her husband, Chester; their three daughters, and their three grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife Vivian and me, along with the more than 730,000 constituents of the Second Congressional District of Georgia, in extending our sincerest congratulations to Mrs. Carolyn G. Randolph for being elected the South Atlantic Regional Director for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and for her many years of service to her community, nation, and all mankind.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF OFFICER DIEGO MORENO

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Police Officer Diego Moreno who died in the line of duty on Sunday, July 22, 2018.

On that somber day, Washington State's law enforcement lost one of their own. Officer Diego Moreno from the Kent Police Department lost his life in the line of duty while placing spike strips while assisting to apprehend the suspects in an active vehicle pursuit.

Officer Moreno was loved by his community and his colleagues. Having grown up in Venezuela, Officer Moreno used his fluency in Spanish to help translate between his fellow officers and the large Hispanic population in the community in which they serve. The Kent Police Department said, "His contributions to our department and positive impact on his co-workers and the community have been significant."

An eight-year veteran with the department, Officer Moreno served in the civil disturbance unit as a hostage negotiator and a defense tactics instructor, and has been recognized for his heroic actions while serving with the department. After saving an elderly woman from a fire, Officer Moreno received the Chiefs Award for Exceptional Duty in 2016. He was also honored by the Kent City Council with the Lifesaving Medal for saving someone from an opioid overdose in June of last year.

Since his passing, Washington State has greatly mourned his loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with his loving family that he leaves behind, his wife and his two children. We also remember his colleagues at the Kent Police Department as they face the heartbreak of losing a coworker and friend.

Over the next week, in Kent, Washington, his family, friends, colleagues, and community will unite to celebrate his life and honor his service to our country. We recognize that same service here in Washington, D.C. today. I join with his family, friends, and community in thanking Police Officer Diego Moreno for his service.

SUMMER INTERN JANSON REQUIST

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Janson Requist for his hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Fourth District as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office for the summer of 2018.

The work of this young man has been exemplary, and I know he has a bright future. He served as a tour guide, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity, and look forward to seeing him build his career in public service.

Janson plans to continue pursuing his degree at Colorado Christian University and

working as a public servant after this internship. I wish him the best as he pursues his career path. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Janson Requist for his service the last several months to the people of Colorado's 4th District.

INCREASING FY19 FUNDING FOR
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OF
CIVIL RIGHTS SITES

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state my excitement that Democrats and Republicans came together this year and supported my amendments to increase FY 2019 funding for competitive grants to preserve the sites and stories of the Civil Rights movement and grants for Civil Rights Preservation of sites on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. In total, our amendments boosted funding for civil rights research by \$4,500,000 for Fiscal Year 2019. I greatly appreciate the bipartisan commitment and support from Interior Subcommittee Chairman CALVERT, Ranking Member MCCOLLUM, and Democratic Assistant Leader CLYBURN.

These grants, as part of the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Fund, are critically important to protecting and preserving Civil Rights history. As the Congresswoman representing the 7th Congressional District of Alabama, also known as the Civil Rights District, I can personally attest to the impact these grants have in the community. Many historic events of the Civil Rights Movement took place within my district, including the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing, the Children's March, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and Bloody Sunday. We are fortunate that the National Park Service is preserving and interpreting these stories, and I am grateful for the Park Service's dedication to telling a more complete version of America's history.

The National Park Service also brings much needed economic revitalization to communities in my district through tourism. In Birmingham, the Civil Rights National Monument and other sites are playing a critical role as part of the new National Civil Rights Trail. In my hometown of Selma, the NPS Selma Interpretive Center attracts tourism to the rural black belt community. These historic sites will also help generate economic activity beyond tourism. In fact, for each dollar invested in National Parks, 10 dollars is generated in national economic activity.

As the foot soldiers of the Civil Rights movement grow older, it is imperative that every effort is made to preserve the stories and sites of the era. There is no place more equipped for such preservation than Historically Black Colleges and Universities. These institutions and their students have a legacy that is inseparable from the Civil Rights Movement. They continue to play a role in activism and education that would make many of those who came before them proud.

The funding that my amendments provided in the House Interior Appropriations bill for FY 2019 is an investment aimed at both historic preservation and economic development. Not only is it important to preserve history in our

districts—we all have important stories to tell that provide education to visitors—but it is also imperative that we help bring much needed development to our communities.

Thanks again to Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member MCCOLLUM, and I urge all of my colleagues to continue supporting this historic preservation funding as we finalize appropriations for FY19.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PATRICK T. McHENRY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. McHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 366, and YEA on Roll Call No. 367.

RECOGNIZING OUR NATION'S COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS DURING PRETRIAL, PROBATION AND PAROLE SUPERVISION WEEK 2018

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the nation's community corrections professionals and the vital role they play in enhancing public safety throughout the United States. In honor of the invaluable contributions of these dedicated public servants, the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) and its associated members have designated July 15 through July 21, 2018, "Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week 2018." I thank the thousands of men and women who perform these important public safety duties, and urge my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in support of APPA's week-long recognition efforts this year.

In my congressional district, the nation's capital, thousands of women and men serve as pretrial, probation and parole officers or administrators. As public servants, these constituents, along with many other Americans, commit themselves on a daily basis to helping improve the lives of those involved in the criminal justice system. The work of these professionals ultimately results in stronger and safer communities for all.

Community corrections professionals are responsible for the supervision of adult and juvenile offenders in communities throughout our nation. These trained professionals go above and beyond the call of duty by connecting their clients to supportive services, community-based resources, employment opportunities, housing programs and other evidence-based practices that help individuals successfully complete supervision and reenter society. Community corrections professionals strive to provide these services and support, while simultaneously providing client supervision, crime prevention and restorative justice.

In honor of Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week 2018, I want to particularly recognize those who carry out community corrections and supervision services here in the

District of Columbia, because unlike in other jurisdictions, officers and professionals of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia (CSOSA) come under congressional jurisdiction.

CSOSA and the Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia (PSA) are dedicated to reducing recidivism and enhancing public safety in the nation's capital. CSOSA and PSA are recognized as model community supervision entities because of their use of evidence-based practices and community partnerships.

On any given day, CSOSA is responsible for supervising approximately 15,000 individuals on probation, parole or supervised release, while PSA supervises over 18,000 defendants over the course of a year. Charged with having to balance issues of public safety with social services and reentry support, the employees of CSOSA and PSA help to enhance the security of everyone who lives, works or visits the District.

Mr. Speaker, again, I extend my gratitude to these public servants for their commitment, compassion and contributions to healthier and safer communities throughout the United States. I ask the House of Representatives to join me in acknowledging the impact community corrections professionals have on the quality of life of all Americans throughout our country by recognizing July 15 through July 21, 2018, as Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week 2018.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, due to inclement weather, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 366, and YEA on Roll Call No. 367.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK POCAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, on July 23, 2018 I was not able to participate in the 6:30 pm vote series. I would like to reflect how I would have voted if I were present: YEA on Roll Call No. 366; and YEA on Roll Call No. 367.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-RIO GRANDE VALLEY'S CHESS CLUB

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) Chess Club for their victory at the President's Cup.

The President's Cup, also known as the Final Four of Chess, determines the national

championship for the United States Chess Federation. The UTRGV chess team advanced to the President's Cup by placing in the top four at the Pan-American Intercollegiate Team Chess Championship.

Under the leadership of Coach Bartek Maciejka, the team, composed of Grandmasters Calors Antonio Hevia Alejano, Vladimir Belous, Kamil Dragun, Hovhannes Gabuzyan, and Andrey Stukopin, won their first championship over five-time consecutive champion Webster University, two-time champion Texas Tech, and St. Louis University. UTRGV has a history of success, finishing in second place at a previous tournament.

The UTRGV Chess Club competes at the state, national, and international levels. The group also helps promote chess within the local community by organizing tournaments, camps, and chess classes.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor the UTRGV Chess Club today. I wish them luck in future competitions and congratulate them on their national championship.

**INADEQUATE WASTEWATER
TREATMENT—ENVIRONMENTAL
INJUSTICE IN AMERICA**

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the pervasive and ongoing environmental injustice affecting the citizens of the 7th Congressional District of Alabama. Many residents of the Black Belt depend on septic tanks for sewage disposal. Because 35–45 percent of residents in the Black Belt face poverty, many cannot afford spending thousands of dollars on a septic tank and the upkeep it requires.

As a result, many have turned to a far less expensive but more alarming alternative: using “straight pipes” to transfer human waste from the home directly to their backyards. This means that folks going for a walk and children playing in their yards are in direct contact with sewage and human waste. During heavy rains, these constituents are left helpless in defending not only their homes, but their health from the effects of raw sewage and human waste. The heavy rains forces waste to go back up pipes and back into homes. The issue of inadequate wastewater treatment is not just a problem in Alabama. It is a problem in communities throughout our country. Additionally, this issue is causing dire health consequences. Several studies have identified parasites specifically in Lowndes County, Alabama. In our great country, the presence of diseases found in third world nations is unacceptable. Wastewater management and other environmental concerns that exacerbate poverty must be addressed.

Most recently, the United Nations weighed in on this issue. After visiting parts of the Black Belt and other impoverished areas in America in December of 2017, United Nations Special Rapporteur Philip Alston was baffled that such a developed and advanced country like the United States could allow its most impoverished to live in such awful conditions. The UN report has confirmed what I have known for a long time: that inadequate waste-

water treatment is a persistent issue in poverty stricken communities. I have been working to address this problem by helping secure an additional \$1.8 billion in funding for wastewater infrastructure in addition to introducing the Rural Septic Tank Access Act. This Act would provide adequate resources for rural families to afford proper septic systems.

UN Ambassador Nikki Haley publicly stated that the UN report and its conclusion about poverty in America was “patently ridiculous” and questioned why poverty in the U.S. needed to be examined. I personally invite Ambassador Haley to my district to witness firsthand the poverty and systemic environmental concerns that millions of Americans experience and suffer from every single day.

Our nation cannot boast such greatness if those suffering the most are left behind. As a proud product of Selma, I know tenacity and grit is commonplace among the great folks of the 7th Congressional District. But to be able to overcome obstacles, basic needs must be met and health concerns should be addressed. We have no option but to stand firm in our fight on the very real and pervasive poverty all over rural America and in the area I call home.

**IN RECOGNITION OF DAVID
PORTMAN**

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize David Portman for his immeasurable contributions to the community and to congratulate him as he receives the Distinguished Leadership Award at Hollywood Golf Club's 2018 Benefit for the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey. Mr. Portman's philanthropy and professional accomplishments are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

President of Triad Group, a development, construction and management company, Mr. Portman is an accomplished and respected businessman in New Jersey. For more than 35 years, Triad Group has completed numerous projects, including medical facilities, legal offices, and residential properties. In addition to his professional work, Mr. Portman is an active member and leader in the Jewish community. He currently serves on the Leaders Council for the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey and has previously served as President of the Jewish Federation of Monmouth County, as Vice President of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and as Regional Chair of Operation Renewal, among others.

Combining his expertise as a developer with his compassionate support of the Jewish community, Mr. Portman has committed years to the construction of The Jewish Home for Rehabilitation and Nursing. This new facility will fulfill Mr. Portman's mission to not only provide necessary medical care to patients, but to also maintain their connection to the Jewish faith and customs. Mr. Portman's vision and respect for the comfort of these patients and their families is truly admirable.

Once again, I sincerely hope my colleagues will join me in honoring David Portman for his dedicated leadership and support of the Jewish community.

TRIBUTE TO THE BRILLIANT LIFE
OF DR. THADDEUS C.
RADZILOWSKI

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the bipartisan Polish Caucus, I rise to pay tribute to the brilliant life and unique contribution to scholarship of Dr. Thaddeus C. Radzilowski who passed away on July 20, 2018 at the age of 80.

Dr. Radzilowski was the co-founder and President of the largest Polish American think tank in the United States known as the Piast Institute founded in Hamtramck, MI. An academic giant in his field, he taught at several prestigious universities including the University of Michigan, Madonna University, Heidelberg College, Southwest Minnesota State University, and finally as President of St. Mary College.

He was a prolific leader in the Polish American community, who uniquely understood the importance of preserving Polish-American heritage in the United States. He held a piercing dedication to accurately and painstakingly recount the sacrificial history of Poland, its people, and its diaspora. The history of Poland, often under-presented, resulted from the annihilation by the Russian military squads (NKVD) of over 23,000 of its preeminent leaders in academia, the military, and religious and community life. Those who would have recorded the 20th century's most bloodied battles were annihilated, making Dr. Radzilowski's scholarship all the more critical.

Under his leadership, the Piast Institute made significant contributions to the study of Central and Eastern Europe including publishing articles and school curricula, convening key experts, presenting exhibitions, and mentoring the next generation of leaders in his field. Thanks to his dedication, he was the recipient of countless awards including the Cavaliers Cross of the Polish Order of Merit presented to him by the Polish President.

A man committed to serving others, Dr. Radzilowski served with dignity and honor in the U.S. Armed Forces in Vietnam. He truly embodied America's values which bind us.

Mr. Speaker, please allow me to join hundreds of thousands of grateful Polish Americans in my district and across the United States in applauding his remarkable career and exemplary life. His legacy will continue to guide and inspire generations to come. That is why I am honored to fly an American flag over the Capitol in his name.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote yesterday on H.R. 2345, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act (Roll no. 366), I would have voted “aye.”

Additionally, had I been present for the vote on H.R. 4881, the Precision Agriculture

Connectivity Act (Roll no. 367), I would have voted "aye."

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF FRANCISCO (FRANK)
"PANCHO" RIOS

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Francisco (Frank) "Pancho" Rios, an Angeleno, a veteran, an immigrant, and a man who lived a rich life full of love and service. With his passing on the evening of July 17, 2018, his loss is being mourned by family, friends, and others who knew him.

Francisco Rios was born in 1930 in the small town of Santa Barbara, Chihuahua, Mexico, and he resided in Mexico until 1952 when he left to attain his piece of the American Dream. He married his wife Paula Vega in 1954, and together they settled in Fresno, California, before ultimately making their home in Los Angeles.

Francisco decided to serve his adopted home, enlisting in the U.S. Army, where he served on active duty from 1955 to 1957, and received an honorable discharge on June 30, 1963. For three decades, he also dedicated himself to serving Los Angeles County residents, working to maintain roadways for the Department of Public Works.

Known affectionately as "Nino" and Uncle Frank, Francisco became an avid traveler, venturing to Africa, the Middle East, Western Europe, and his favorite destination, Las Vegas. He fondly recounted many of his travels, including his spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and to Vatican City. An Angeleno through and through, he was everyone's favorite tour guide of Los Angeles and its surrounding areas, regularly exposing out-of-town family visitors to the diversity of the region's sights and attractions.

While Francisco and his wife Paula did not have children together, they were an affectionate presence in the lives of their nieces and nephews, to whom they showed love, wisdom, kindness, and unwavering and unconditional support. The latest of these was Kaila Vega, daughter of Amador Vega.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in sending heartfelt condolences to the family of Francisco Rios. He leaves behind a rich legacy of love, patience, warmth, affection, strength, and wisdom that will be deeply missed by his loved ones. He is preceded in death by his parents Francisco and Soledad and his wife Paula, and he is survived by siblings, many nieces and nephews, and godchildren, who will deeply miss and cherish the memory of their "Nino" and Uncle Frank.

HONORING CARL CHILTON'S 95TH
BIRTHDAY

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 95th birthday of Mr. Carl Chilton,

who is a proud graduate of Port Isabel High School and Texas College of Arts and Industries at Kingsville. In 1942, Mr. Chilton enlisted in the Army Air Corps, earning his wings when he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1944. Texas and the United States are forever grateful for his service and leadership throughout his 13 missions in France and other parts of the world.

After serving in the military, Mr. Chilton majored in accounting at the the University of Texas at Austin. His classroom and leadership experience led him to become a teacher at Brownsville Junior College, where he taught introductory business.

A man of family, service, and faith, Mr. Chilton is a member of the First United Methodist Church and an active community resident. A former contributor to our district local news outlet The Brownsville Herald and past president of the Brownsville Tennis Club, Mr. Chilton exemplifies the best of South Texas. He has been a loyal member of the Rotary Club for 53 years, served as president and chairman of the Brownsville Public Utilities Board, and was president of the Valley Zoological Society.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to honor and celebrate Carl Chilton's 95th birthday. I ask my colleagues to join me and Mr. Chilton's family and friends in wishing him well on this special occasion. Mr. Chilton's devotion to his family and community make him a great role model for the people of Brownsville Texas, and I am very proud to be his Representative.

HONORING BEN HARDEMAN OF
BRYAN TEXAS

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ben Hardeman, a resident of Bryan, Texas, and the 2018 recipient of the Outstanding Individual Contribution award from the League of Historic American Theatres, a national organization.

In 2010, Ben was chairman of the Downtown Bryan Association and heard that the abandoned Queen Theatre was put up for sale. The structure was built in 1885, and first served as a hotel and boarding house. By 1913, silent films were being shown and by 1939 the building was completely redone and included "chilled air", something of a novelty in that era. The Queen continued to thrive until the late 1970s when the building was shuttered. By the time the Association purchased the building, it had been abandoned for 40 years. The theatre had a hole in the roof, pigeons in the rafters, and rotting wood.

Ben brought the idea of the purchasing and restoring the Queen to the Downtown Bryan Association's Board of Trustees. They approved the purchase and began raising money for a down payment. Just shy of reaching the required amount, Ben paid the rest of the money personally.

Ben spearheaded the restoration of the building, aiming to make it a truly community effort. The Association began collecting donations and within a few weeks, they raised \$30,000 in pledges. Work quickly began on

gutting the theatre with Ben and several other Bryan residents assisting with the demolition and clean-up.

By 2011, the theatre's Art Deco facade was restored with Ben often seen doing much of the physical labor. Between 2013 and the Queen's re-opening on May 4, 2018, Ben and the Association made plans to restore the theatre's interior and began fund raising efforts for this purpose.

Ben spearheaded much of the effort, obtaining labor and material donations, and even designing the handrails inside the building.

Since its re-opening, the Queen now serves as a single-screen movie theatre, performance venue, and, it also houses the Downtown Bryan Association and visitor's center.

Thanks to Ben Hardeman's vision, the work of the Downtown Bryan Association and many volunteers who donated time, money, and resources, the Queen Theatre is once again a place for the community to gather and enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Ben Hardeman on receiving the Outstanding Individual Contribution award and recognize all the work done to restore the historic Queen Theatre in Bryan, Texas.

I have requested that a United States flag be flown over the United States Capitol to honor Be Hardeman and the Queen Theatre.

As I close today, I urge all Americans to continue praying for our country during these difficult times, for our military men and women who protect us from external threats, and for our first responders who protect us here at home.

HONORING THE 70TH
ANNIVERSARY OF LIFETRACK

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lifetrack on 70 years of providing high quality supportive services to some of the most vulnerable residents of Saint Paul, Minnesota and surrounding communities. Throughout decades of adaptations, Lifetrack remains constant in serving those in need, and empowering families to thrive through challenges.

In 1948, injured veterans returning from WWII and families ravaged by the polio epidemic faced major obstacles. Lifetrack was born as a collaboration of social services agencies that embarked on a mission to provide speech, physical, and occupational therapies to these adults and children. Later, the organization launched vocational programs that aimed to prepare people for life and work after their rehabilitation. Services have continued to expand to assist families and individuals experiencing homelessness and new refugees. Lifetrack also now provides services to families of highly stressed and deaf and hard-of-hearing children to help them build social, emotional and life skills that can carry them through their lives.

When individuals and families face adversity, a network of support is critical to resiliency. For the most vulnerable in our community, that support is not always available. Lifetrack strengthens our community by empowering families and forging connections.

Staff and volunteers make it their mission to help individuals build their own support systems and by connecting them to services both within and outside the organization. All of us benefit when individuals and families have the tools to reach their full potential.

For 70 years Lifetrack has worked to help the most vulnerable achieve better lives by building resilience, breaking cycles of trauma and hardship, and providing therapies that make working and living a comfortable life more attainable.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the staff, volunteers, board of Lifetrack on seven decades of remarkable service to the community.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. W.
TAYLOR REVELEY, III

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. W. Taylor Reveley, III's service as the 27th President of the College of William and Mary and former Dean of the William and Mary Law School. Mr. Reveley will be retiring from his post as President of the College after serving in that capacity since 2008.

Before his time at the College of William and Mary, Mr. Reveley graduated from Princeton University in 1968 and later received his J.D. from the University of Virginia in 1968. Mr. Reveley went on to have an impressive career as a lawyer, clerking for Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. of the U.S. Supreme Court, and serving as a managing partner at the Hunton and Williams Law Firm. After a successful legal career, Mr. Reveley joined the College of William and Mary in 1998, serving as Dean of the Law School for 10 years before being named President in 2008.

Since joining as President in 2008, the College of William and Mary has had tremendous success under President Reveley. During his tenure, the campus has experienced large-scale expansions and renovations to its buildings and facilities. President Reveley was also responsible for updating and revising the undergraduate curriculum for the first time in over 20 years with the innovative College (COLL) Curriculum. Some of his focuses as President revolved around diversity and inclusion efforts, sexual assault and violence response and prevention, and mental health and wellness programs across campus. Alumni engagements and philanthropic efforts reached all-time highs thanks to President Reveley, who adopted a new and innovative financial model to increase funding to the College.

President Reveley is heavily involved in numerous educational, cultural, and religious organizations, and has served on various boards throughout the community. Though President Reveley is retiring, I am confident he and his wife, Helen, will have plenty to do with all of their philanthropic work and three grandchildren whom they will be spending more time with. I know I speak for not only folks in academia, but Virginia as a whole, when I say that President Reveley and his contributions will be sorely missed. He will certainly leave an indelible mark on the College of William and Mary that will last a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in thanking Mr. Reveley for his great leadership and honoring his accomplishments he achieved as the 27th President of the College of William and Mary.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE RUSSELL

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, due to unavoidable travel delays, I was not able to be present for the first vote in the vote series yesterday evening. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on roll call No. 365.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GARRET GRAVES

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, my flight was delayed due to weather. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 366, and YEA on Roll Call No. 367.

HONORING THE UIL 3A STATE
CHAMPIONS SANTA GERTRUDIS
ACADEMY SOFTBALL TEAM

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Santa Gertrudis Academy softball team for winning the UIL 3A State Softball Championship this year. After making appearances at the state tournament in 2016 and 2017, the Lady Lions of Santa Gertrudis Academy left with a championship title.

At the state championship match, the team claimed the title with an impressive 8-3 win. This title-clinching victory cemented an outstanding 38-1 overall record for the Lady Lions of Santa Gertrudis Academy. Saidi Castillo pitched a perfect game in the semifinal against Brock High School and then held Hughes Springs High School to three runs on seven hits in the final championship game. Saidi Castillo's stellar performance on the field led her to be named "Most Valuable Player" of the season.

Members of the state championship team were Sara Benavides, Alana Benitez, Breana Carr, Saidi Castillo, Ariana De La Paz, Carissa De Los Santos, Jackie De Los Santos, Jackie Garza, Alyssa Gonzalez, Elleanna Longoria, Arianna Lopez, Yadira Lopez, Sarah Obregon, Alyssa Robles, Ali Salinas, and Kennedy Silva. Thomas De Los Santos coached the winning team, along with assistant coaches Matt Gonzalez, Amy Perez and Bianca Rocha.

On behalf of the 34th Congressional District of Texas, I extend my congratulations to the Santa Gertrudis Academy softball team and their coaches for winning the UIL 3A State Softball Championship. We are very proud of their accomplishments this year and look for-

ward to the Lady Lions' next championship season.

CONGRATULATING COUNCILMEMBER
NANCY WELTON OF HURST,
TEXAS ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding public servant from my district, Councilmember Nancy Welton of Hurst, Texas, who is retiring after 14 years of service on the Hurst City Council.

While Nancy has served as a councilmember for the last 14 years, her commitment to her community began well before then. As a resident of Hurst for over 33 years, Nancy has shown a profound commitment to the children of Hurst and to their education. She has served as PTA President for both Shady Oaks Elementary and L.D. Bell High School, in addition to serving on the Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD School Board for 12 years.

Nancy's service as a councilmember has helped the city of Hurst experience redevelopment, revitalization, and economic prosperity through a number of initiatives and development projects, such as the Hurst Town Center, Hurst Conference Center, and Hurst Senior Center. The city has also expanded parks and recreation programs and championed customer service and staff development initiatives with the help of Nancy's leadership.

At the heart of these projects is a commitment to public safety and high quality of life for the nearly 40,000 residents of Hurst. In recognition of the City Council's efforts, the Texas City Manager's Association recognized the Hurst City Council as "Council of the Year" in both 2013 and 2014. For more than three decades, Nancy Welton has demonstrated an outstanding dedication to public service and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring Councilmember Nancy Welton for her extraordinary service and wishing her and her family the best in her retirement.

HONORING VERMONT'S WAYSIDE
RESTAURANT ON ITS 100TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Wayside Restaurant in Berlin, Vermont. This year marks the Wayside's 100th anniversary of serving up exceptional and affordable home-style food to customers from central Vermont and beyond.

A century ago, founder Effie Ballou first started serving soups, snacks and meals out of a shack straddling the border between Berlin and Montpelier. She prepared the food at her small house just up the hill.

Today, the Wayside—with a lot more seats than in 1918—is still serving up some of the

best home-cooked food around. Its website proudly and accurately proclaims, "Yankee Cooking at its Best Since 1918." On the occasion of this important milestone, the restaurant joins an eclectic group of some 240 American restaurants that have achieved centennial status.

Mr. Speaker, I'm warning you. Take just a glance at the Wayside's diverse menu and your mouth will water: old-fashioned country breakfast, chicken pie, country fried steak, meatloaf, casseroles, fresh muffins and home-made pies.

But the Wayside is so much more than a good restaurant. For the thousands of Vermonters and visitors who walk through its doors every year, it provides comfort, fellowship and a sense of community rivaled by few. While dining on good food, customers catch up with friends and neighbors, trade gossip, and debate current events.

Owners Brian and Karen Zecchinelli have been at the helm for over 20 years. The restaurant has been in Karen's family for over 50 years. Their employees are familiar and friendly faces. Many have been on the job for ten years or more. And in a tribute to their good service, the aprons of retired employees hang proudly in the rafters.

The Wayside Restaurant has been part of the fabric of Vermont for 100 years. It is a shining example of a small business committed to good service, quality products, and socially responsible operations. I urge all Members of the House of Representatives to stop by the Wayside if you find yourself navigating the hills of central Vermont. But be careful—you won't want to leave.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF LOIS FITCH

HON. DAVID SCHWEIKERT

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Lois Fitch who passed away on July 23, 2018. Throughout all of my life, I have known Lois as someone who dedicated herself to helping young people find ways to become more meaningfully engaged in their community. Through her work leading the Teenage Republicans, Lois helped so many individuals find their place in the civics of working to improve our town, state, country, and America's place in the world. Lois epitomized a leader. She was kind and gracious to all. She was encouraging and supportive in helping others find their passions. She was the reason I decided to run for elective office. And, she has inspired me and so many others to serve on all levels of government. This past Sunday I had a chance to visit with Lois in the hospital. As I shared with her then, I will share here in the United States Congress—"Lois, you changed me for the better, and I will forever be grateful for your courage and service." May the flag of the United States Capitol fly in full tribute to her.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GLOBE AND LAUREL'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of The Globe and Laurel, a military and law enforcement themed restaurant located in Stafford, VA. Please join me in recognizing this restaurant and its owner, Major Richard Spooner, USMC, Retired as they celebrate their 50 year anniversary.

Major Richard Spooner opened The Globe and Laurel restaurant in 1968 after serving for over 29 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. At a young age, Richard Spooner fought in various battles throughout the Pacific and was awarded four Purple Hearts for his brave sacrifice. He remained in the Marine Corps and fought in both the Korean and Vietnam War. After retiring from service, Major Spooner turned his passion for good food into his full-time job by opening his restaurant in Quantico and due to a fire, relocated to Triangle in 1973 and then in 2008 to Stafford, Virginia.

Major Spooner opened his restaurant as a way to honor the brave men and women who live to serve and protect our great country. The Globe and Laurel intends to proudly honor the history and service of the Marine Corps by serving delicious food and offering unmatched customer service. On display at the restaurant is an extensive collection of military memorabilia, including a Medal of Honor and Victoria Cross. Additionally, the restaurant has been recognized and praised in numerous periodicals and television shows for its fine dining, atmosphere, and camaraderie. The Globe and Laurel restaurant is a staple of Stafford County; a community institution so loved by many.

Mr. Speaker, as The Globe and Laurel celebrates its 50 year anniversary, I ask you to join me in recognizing Major Spooner for his service; and his restaurant for its fine food and dedication to honoring the men and women who live to serve our country.

HONORING TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE NCAA WOMEN'S BEACH VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Texas A&M-Kingsville Javelinas for their 2018 American Volleyball Coaches Association Division II National Championship win.

The Texas A&M-Kingsville Women's Beach Volleyball team was started in 2016, and they played their inaugural season in 2017. Head coach Tanya Allen, along with assistant coaches Gary Payne and Stephanie Johns, are invaluable to the success of this young team thus far.

The Javelinas ended the 2018 season with a 20–10 record, never losing a game in Kingsville. Freshmen Tenley Housler and Erin Umbel held the best set record of the team at

15–7. These promising players were joined by their teammates Gabby Atchley, Macy Berg, Kyleus Block, Madison Brabham, Kyra Henderson, Haley Hutchinson, Sarah Miller, Kadi Shipman, Madeline Sims, Maelee Sowa, Shelby Tate, Whitney Walker and Loren Washington.

During championship play at Hickory Point Beach Sand Volleyball Complex in Tavares, Florida, the Javelinas received a bye in the quarterfinal round. They then triumphed over the Spring Hill College Badgers in the semifinal game by a score of 3–2. The final match played against the Ekerd College Tritons saw the Javelinas prevail with a 4–1 win, securing the National Championship for the university.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Javelinas for their National Championship which has brought pride and recognition to Texas A&M-Kingsville.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the American Legion on its 100th anniversary and to welcome the 2018 national convention back to Minnesota where this venerable organization had its founding convention November 10–12, 1919. It is a special privilege to recognize the host of this historic gathering, the American Legion Department of Minnesota. Minnesotans are honored to welcome Legionnaires from across America. We are grateful for the many contributions the American Legion makes on behalf of all men and women who have worn the uniform through its 2.3 million members in 14,000 posts in communities across the United States. We also welcome National Commander Denise Rohan, the first woman to serve as National Commander of the American Legion.

Only steps away from where this year's convention is being held in Minneapolis, the American Legion was founded 100 years ago. The American Legion is a voice for those who served in the U.S. Armed Forces and to assist veterans who were disabled through their service. Since its founding, the American Legion has been a driving force expanding services provided by the Federal Government for our nation's veterans and their families, including creation of the forerunner to the modern-day Department of Veterans Affairs. As the American Legion's advocacy and vision continued, services for veterans improved. In 1922, the American Legion Department of Minnesota created the Minnesota American Legion Hospital Association to provide medical care to veterans and their dependents at little or no cost. This groundbreaking effort helped to build the extensive hospital and clinic system of the VA Health Care Administration.

Since the founding of the American Legion, women have been vital to the successful advocacy efforts on behalf of veterans. One hundred years ago, a Legion women's auxiliary group began to form robust child-welfare and hospital visitation programs. As a life member of the American Legion Auxiliary Post No. 39, North Saint Paul, Minnesota, I know firsthand

the many contributions that local auxiliary posts make to our veterans, our community, our state and our nation.

From drafting the original document that would later become the first GI Bill to the ongoing "We Believe Campaign" highlighting the positive impacts that veterans make on their communities, the American Legion continues its essential work to support our veterans and their families for their service and sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Commander Rohan and the 2.3 million members of the American Legion as they meet to convene their 100th national convention in the place where it all started, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9981 TO DESEGREGATE THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 70th anniversary of President Harry S. Truman's commitment to desegregate the Armed Forces of our great nation.

It is my belief that the "Equality of Treatment and Opportunity; Executive Order 9981" was an indelible demarcation in the ever-present battle to eradicate racial discrimination within American society. Moreover, the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum will be hosting an event on Thursday, July 26 to honor this groundbreaking step towards equality as well as Truman's other efforts to expand rights for African American citizens. As the U.S. Representative of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, it gives me great pride and joy to praise both President Truman for his valiant and just actions and the Truman Library for hosting such a noteworthy event within my district.

Born and raised in the state of Missouri, President Truman was a man of remarkable character and ambition. Although he was born less than twenty years after the abolishment of slavery, in a time immersed in significant racial ramifications, the former president advanced civil rights in the United States. One prominent example of the trailblazing legacy President Truman left behind is the issuance of Executive Orders 9980 and 9981 to desegregate the Armed Forces and federal workforce. As an individual who has actively sought to further expand and build upon this legacy, it is truly an honor to join the Truman Library in celebrating the 70th anniversary of such an impactful milestone.

Today, the United States Armed Forces encompass four diverse and heterogeneous branches of brave, selfless, and upstanding servicemen and women. Prior to this Executive Order, African American members of the military had different rules than other servicemembers, which often delayed their entry to combat. Although other servicemembers could begin their combat training in the months following their initial qualifications, most African Americans were forced to wait four years to begin training.

Since the founding of our country, African Americans and other individuals of color actively participated in the Armed Forces; however, intentionally attempting to separate or delay this participation was also a perpetual occurrence within the military. President Truman's issuance of the Executive Order of 1948 was the directive that officially and completely abolished this practice.

Mr. Speaker, please join with me as we commemorate the 70th anniversary of President Harry S. Truman's Executive Order 9981. The courageous actions taken by President Truman to eliminate racial discrimination within America's armed forces are a true display of leadership and a legacy that will live on for generations to come. Furthermore, it is my hope that we will honor our only president from Missouri by continuing the effort to end racial discrimination in American society once and for all.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S5227–S5314

Measures Introduced: Six bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3256–3261, and S. Res. 588–591. **Page S5267**

Measures Passed:

National Day of the American Cowboy: Senate agreed to S. Res. 589, designating July 28, 2018, as “National Day of the American Cowboy”. **Page S5312**

Pioneer Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 590, recognizing the 171st anniversary of the arrival of pioneers belonging to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the Great Salt Lake Valley in Utah, and the contributions of the Church and its members to the United States and the world. **Page S5312**

National Purple Heart Recognition Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 591, supporting the goals and ideals of National Purple Heart Recognition Day. **Page S5312**

Drug Enforcement Administration 45th Anniversary: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 578, honoring the men and women of the Drug Enforcement Administration on the 45th anniversary of the agency, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S5312**

National Trademark Exposition of the United States Patent and Trademark Office: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 580, recognizing and supporting public awareness of the importance of trademarks and the goals and ideals of the National Trademark Exposition of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S5312**

State Offices of Rural Health Reauthorization Act: Senate passed S. 2278, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide grants to improve health care in rural areas, after agreeing to the committee amendment. **Pages S5312–14**

Measures Considered:

Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 6147, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S5230–40, S5240–62**

Adopted:

By 98 yeas to 1 nay (Vote No. 164), Collins (for Heller/Brown) Amendment No. 3405 (to Amendment No. 3399), to increase the amount available for a Community Volunteer Income Tax Assistance matching grants program for tax return preparation assistance. **Pages S5240–41**

By a unanimous vote of 99 yeas (Vote No. 165), Collins (for Durbin) Amendment No. 3422 (to Amendment No. 3399), to require the Inspector General to update an audit report concerning on-time performance of Amtrak. **Pages S5240–41**

By 97 yeas to 1 nay (Vote No. 166), Murkowski (for Schatz/Hirono) Amendment No. 3407 (to Amendment No. 3399), to provide for a report on facilities of the Department of the Interior damaged by certain volcanic eruptions. **Pages S5255–58**

By 87 yeas to 11 nays (Vote No. 167), Murkowski (for Kennedy/Cassidy) Amendment No. 3430 (to Amendment No. 3399), to provide amounts for inspection of foreign seafood manufacturers and field examinations of imported seafood. **Pages S5255–58**

Pending:

Shelby Amendment No. 3399, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S5230–40, S5240–62**

Murkowski Amendment No. 3400 (to Amendment No. 3399), of a perfecting nature. **Page S5230**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that it be in order to call up the following amendments to Shelby Amendment No. 3399 (listed above): Moran Amendment No. 3433, and Udall Amendment No. 3414; and that at 2:30 p.m., on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, Senate vote on or in relation to Moran Amendment No. 3433, and Udall Amendment No. 3414, in the order listed, and that

there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendments prior to the votes. **Page S5314**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 10 a.m., on Wednesday, July 25, 2018.

Page S5314

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Bruce Landsberg, of South Carolina, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2022.

Jennifer L. Homendy, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2019.

Pages S5262, S5314

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

J. Nicholas Ranjan, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Tamara Bonzanto, of New Jersey, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection). **Page S5314**

Nomination Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nomination:

Ryan Wesley Bounds, of Oregon, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, which was sent to the Senate on January 8, 2018.

Page S5314

Messages from the House: **Pages S5264–65**

Measures Referred: **Page S5265**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S5265**

Executive Communications: **Pages S5265–66**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S5266–67**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S5267–69**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:
Pages S5269–70

Additional Statements: **Pages S5263–64**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S5270–S5311**

Authorities for Committees to Meet:
Pages S5311–12

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S5312**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—167) **Pages S5241, S5258**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 8:20 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, July 25, 2018. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S5314.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Dan Michael Berkovitz, of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and James E. Hubbard, of Colorado, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment, who was introduced by Senator Bennet, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported 4,120 nominations in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Elad L. Roisman, of Maine, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Michael R. Bright, of the District of Columbia, to be President, Government National Mortgage Association, and Rae Oliver, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, both of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Dino Falaschetti, of Montana, to be Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

NOAA'S BLUE ECONOMY INITIATIVE

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard concluded a hearing to examine the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's blue economy initiative, focusing on supporting commerce in American oceans and Great Lakes, after receiving testimony from Rear Admiral Timothy Gallaudet, USN (Ret.), Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere and Acting Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce.

EMPOWERING U.S. AMATEUR ATHLETES

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security concluded a hearing to examine strengthening and empowering United States amateur athletes, focusing on moving forward with solutions, after receiving testimony from John Engler, Michigan State University, East Lansing; Susanne Lyons, United States Olympic Committee,

Colorado Springs, Colorado; Kerry Perry, USA Gymnastics, Indianapolis, Indiana; and Han Xiao, Athlete Advisory Council, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Teri L. Donaldson, of Texas, to be Inspector General, Karen S. Evans, of West Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response), Christopher Fall, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Science, and Daniel Simmons, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy), all of the Department of Energy.

GLOBAL OIL PRICES

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine factors that are impacting global oil prices, after receiving testimony from John R. Auers, Turner, Mason and Company, Dallas, Texas; Jason E. Bordoff, Columbia University

School of International and Public Affairs, New York, New York; E. Russell Brazier, RBN Energy, LLC, Houston, Texas; Robert McNally, Rapidan Energy Group, Bethesda, Maryland; and Keisuke Sadamori, International Energy Agency, Paris, France.

THE CHINA CHALLENGE

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy concluded a hearing to examine the China challenge, focusing on economic coercion as statecraft, after receiving testimony from Dan Blumenthal, American Enterprise Institute, and Ely Ratner, Center for a New American Security, both of Washington, D.C.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 22 public bills, H.R. 6479–6500; and 9 resolutions, H. Res. 1017–1025 were introduced. **Pages H7154–55**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H7156–57**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 5649, to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to amend the Social Security Act, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–864, Part 1);

H.R. 5882, to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the termination by a spouse of a lessee of certain leases when the lessee dies while in military service (H. Rept. 115–865);

H.R. 2409, to allow servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed (H. Rept. 115–866);

H.R. 2787, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a pilot program instituting a clin-

ical observation program for pre-med students preparing to attend medical school, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–867);

H.R. 5693, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts and agreements for the placement of veterans in non-Department medical foster homes for certain veterans who are unable to live independently, with amendments (H. Rept. 115–868);

H.R. 5974, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–869);

H.R. 5538, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain additional periods of active duty service for purposes of suspending charges to veterans' entitlement to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs during periods of suspended participation in vocational rehabilitation programs (H. Rept. 115–870);

H.R. 5938, to amend the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a vacancy and recruitment database to facilitate the recruitment of certain members

of the Armed Forces to satisfy the occupational needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish and implement a training and certification program for intermediate care technicians in that Department, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–871);

H.R. 5864, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish qualifications for the human resources positions within the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–872); and

H. Res. 1020, waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (H. Rept. 115–873).

Pages H7153–54

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Palazzo to act as Speaker pro tempore for today.

Page H7089

Recess: The House recessed at 10:35 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon.

Page H7093

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Imam Seyed Ali Ghazvini, Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno, Fresno, California.

Page H7093

Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2018—Rule for Consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 1012, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6199) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include certain over-the-counter medical products as qualified medical expenses, and providing for proceedings during the period from July 27, 2018, through September 3, 2018, by a recorded vote of 229 ayes to 179 noes, Roll No. 369, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 224 yeas to 184 nays, Roll No. 368.

Pages H7100–06

Recess: The House recessed at 4:39 p.m. and reconvened at 4:50 p.m.

Page H7124

Protect Medical Innovation Act: The House passed H.R. 184, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices, by a yea-and-nay vote of 283 yeas to 132 nays, Roll No. 372.

Pages H7119–24, 7124–25

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment printed in H. Rept. 115–860 shall be considered as adopted.

Page H7119

H. Res. 1011, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 184) and (H.R. 6311) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 225 ayes to 184 noes, Roll No. 371, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 223 yeas to 188 nays, Roll No. 370.

Pages H7095–H7100, H7106–07

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Equitable Access to Care and Health Act: H.R. 1201, amended, to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate;

Pages H7107–09

Native American Health Savings Improvement Act: H.R. 1476, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit individuals eligible for Indian Health Service assistance to qualify for health savings accounts;

Pages H7109–10

Water and Agriculture Tax Reform Act: H.R. 519, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency;

Pages H7110–12

Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act of 2018: H.R. 3500, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service from rehiring any employee of the Internal Revenue Service who was involuntarily separated from service for misconduct;

Pages H7112–13

Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act: H.R. 6084, amended, to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to provide for a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration for individuals who are victims of identity theft;

Pages H7113–15

Improving Seniors Access to Quality Benefits Act: H.R. 4952, amended, to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study and submit a report on the effects of the inclusion of quality increases in the determination of blended benchmark amounts under part C of the Medicare program;

Pages H7115–16

Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Transparency Act of 2018: H.R. 6138, amended, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for ambulatory surgical center representation during the review of hospital outpatient payment rates under part B of the Medicare program;

Pages H7116–18

Tribal Social Security Fairness Act of 2018: H.R. 6124, amended, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to authorize voluntary agreements for coverage of Indian tribal council members;

Pages H7118–19

Allowing servicemembers to terminate their cable, satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed: H.R. 2409, amended, to allow servicemembers to terminate their cable,

satellite television, and Internet access service contracts while deployed; **Pages H7130–31**

Veterans-Specific Education for Tomorrow's Medical Doctors Act: H.R. 2787, amended, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a pilot program instituting a clinical observation program for pre-med students preparing to attend medical school; **Pages H7132–33**

Amending title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain additional periods of active duty service for purposes of suspending charges to veterans' entitlement to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs during periods of suspended participation in vocational rehabilitation programs: H.R. 5538, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain additional periods of active duty service for purposes of suspending charges to veterans' entitlement to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs during periods of suspended participation in vocational rehabilitation programs; **Pages H7133–34**

Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer William 'Bill' Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improvement Act of 2018: H.R. 5649, amended, to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to amend the Social Security Act, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces; **Pages H7134–40**

Gold Star Spouses Leasing Relief Act: H.R. 5882, amended, to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the termination by a spouse of a lessee of certain leases when the lessee dies while in military service; **Pages H7140–41**

Veterans Serving Veterans Act of 2018: H.R. 5938, amended, to amend the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a vacancy and recruitment database to facilitate the recruitment of certain members of the Armed Forces to satisfy the occupational needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish and implement a training and certification program for intermediate care technicians in that Department; and **Pages H7142–44**

Department of Veterans Affairs Creation of On-Site Treatment Systems Affording Veterans Improvements and Numerous General Safety Enhancements Act: H.R. 5974, amended, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated

medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities. **Pages H7144–45**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act: S. 1182, amended, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion; and **Pages H7125–30**

VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance Act: H.R. 5864, amended, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish qualifications for the human resources positions within the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs. **Pages H7141–42**

Raising a question of the privileges of the House pursuant to article I, section 7, of the United States Constitution: Agreed by unanimous consent to H. Res. 1019, raising a question of the privileges of the House pursuant to article I, section 7, of the United States Constitution. **Page H7150**

Recess: The House recessed at 8:39 p.m. and reconvened at 9:28 p.m. **Page H7150**

Senate Referral: S. 2503 was held at the desk.

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H7107.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and two recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7105, H7105–06, H7106–07, H7107, and H7124–25. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing on H.R. 4219, the “Workflex in the 21st Century Act”. Testimony was heard from Gayle L. Goldin, Senator, General Assembly, Rhode Island; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING ADVERTISING AND MARKETING PRACTICES WITHIN THE SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT INDUSTRY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Examining Advertising and Marketing Practices within the Substance Use Treatment Industry”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

DOE MODERNIZATION: LEGISLATION TO AUTHORIZE A PILOT PROJECT TO COMMERCIALIZE THE STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled “DOE Modernization: Legislation to Authorize a Pilot Project to Commercialize the Strategic Petroleum Reserve”. Testimony was heard from Steven Winberg, Assistant Secretary of Fossil Energy, Department of Energy; Frank Rusco, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1511, the “Homeless Children and Youth Act of 2017”; H.R. 2069, the “Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2017”; H.R. 2570, the “Mortgage Fairness Act of 2017”; H.R. 3626, the “Bank Service Company Examination Coordination Act of 2017”; H.R. 5036, the “Financial Technology Protection Act”; H.R. 5059, the “State Insurance Regulation Preservation Act”; and H.R. 6332, the “Improving Strategies to Counter Weapons Proliferation Act”. H.R. 1511, H.R. 2069, H.R. 5036, H.R. 3626, and H.R. 5059 were ordered reported, as amended. H.R. 6332 and H.R. 2570 were ordered reported, without amendment.

EGYPT: SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND REFORM

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Middle East and North Africa held a hearing entitled “Egypt: Security, Human Rights, and Reform”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 5869, the “Maritime Border Security Review Act”; H.R. 6198, the “Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 2018”; H.R. 6265, the “PreCheck is PreCheck Act of 2018”; H.R. 6374, the “FIT Act”; H.R. 6400, the “United States Ports of Entry Threat and Operational Review Act”; H.R. 6430, the “Securing the Homeland Security Supply Chain Act of 2018”; H.R. 6438, the “DHS Countering Unmanned Aircraft Systems Coordinator Act”; H.R. 6439, the “Biometric Identification Transnational Migration Alert Program Authorization Act of 2018”; H.R. 6443, the “Advancing Cybersecurity Diagnostics and Mitigation Act”; H.R. 6459, the “TSA Opportunities to Pursue Expanded Networks for Business Act”; H.R. 6461, the “TSA National Deployment Force Act”; H.R. 6447, the “Department of Homeland Security Chief Data Officer Authorization Act”; H. Res. 1005, directing

the Secretary of Homeland Security to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the border security policies, procedures, and activities as such relate to the interdiction of families by the U.S. Border Patrol between ports of entry. H.R. 5869, H.R. 6198, H.R. 6265, H.R. 6374, H.R. 6400, H.R. 6443, and H.R. 6447 were ordered reported, as amended. H.R. 6430, H.R. 6438, H.R. 6439, H.R. 6459, H.R. 6461, and H. Res. 1005 were ordered reported, without amendment.

BOOTS AT THE BORDER: EXAMINING THE NATIONAL GUARD DEPLOYMENT TO THE SOUTHWEST BORDER

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled “Boots at the Border: Examining the National Guard Deployment to the Southwest Border”. Testimony was heard from Rodolfo Karisch, Chief Patrol Agent, Tucson Sector, U.S. Border Patrol, Department of Homeland Security; Major General John F. Nichols, Adjutant General, Texas National Guard, U.S. Army National Guard; and Major General Michael T. McGuire, Adjutant General, Arizona National Guard, U.S. Army National Guard.

EXAMINING THE WAYFAIR DECISION AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS FOR CONSUMERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Examining the Wayfair decision and its Ramifications for Consumers and Small Businesses”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ASSESSING INNOVATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE USES OF COAL

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “Assessing Innovative and Alternative Uses of Coal”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 5244, the “Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reservation Reaffirmation Act”; S. 607, the “Native American Business Incubators Program Act”; and S. 1116, the “Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act of 2018”. Testimony was heard from Darryl LaCounte, Acting Deputy Bureau Director—Office of Trust Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

CYBER-SECURING THE VOTE: ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF THE U.S. ELECTION SYSTEM

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Cyber-securing the Vote: Ensuring the Integrity of the U.S. Election System”. Testimony was heard from Christopher Krebs, Under Secretary, National Protection and Programs Directorate, Department of Homeland Security; Thomas Hicks, Commissioner, U.S. Election Assistance Commission; Maggie Toulouse Oliver, Secretary of State, New Mexico; and Ricky Hatch, County Auditor, Weber County, Utah.

SHIELDING SOURCES: SAFEGUARDING THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Healthcare, Benefits and Administrative Rules; and Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Affairs held a joint hearing entitled “Shielding Sources: Safeguarding the Public's Right to Know”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PRESERVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRAZING ON FEDERAL LAND

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy, and Environment held a hearing entitled “Preserving Opportunities for Grazing on Federal Land”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY THE JOHN S. MCCAIN NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

Committee on Rules: Full Committee began a hearing on the Conference Report to accompany H.R. 5515, the “John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019”. Testimony was heard from Chairman Thornberry and Representative Smith of Washington.

WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(A) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H. Res. 1020, waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules. The Committee granted, by voice vote, a rule providing for the consideration of H. Res. ——. The rule waives clause 6(a) of rule XIII

(requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Rules Committee) against any resolution reported through the legislative day of July 27, 2018 relating to a measure authorizing appropriations for the Department of Defense. In section 2, the rule provides that it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of July 26, 2018, or July 27, 2018, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules relating to a measure authorizing appropriations for the Department of Defense. Finally, in section 3, the rule provides that the Committee on Appropriations may, at any time before 3 p.m. on Thursday, August 2, 2018, file privileged reports to accompany measures making appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019.

URBAN AIR MOBILITY—ARE FLYING CARS READY FOR TAKE-OFF?

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Urban Air Mobility—Are Flying Cars Ready for Take-Off?”. Testimony was heard from Jaiwon Shin, Associate Administrator, Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 6468, the “Improving Science in Chemical Assessments Act”; and S. 141, the “Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act”. S. 141 was ordered reported, as amended. H.R. 6468 was ordered reported, without amendment.

INVESTING IN RURAL AMERICA

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access; and Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy, and Trade held a joint hearing entitled “Investing in Rural America”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

UPDATE ON COAST GUARD ACQUISITION PROGRAMS AND MISSION BALANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled “Update on Coast Guard Acquisition Programs and Mission Balance and Effectiveness”. Testimony was heard from Vice Admiral Daniel Abel, Deputy Commandant for Operations, U.S. Coast Guard; Vice Admiral Michael McAllister, Deputy Commandant for Mission Support, U.S. Coast Guard; and Marie A. Mak, Director of Acquisition and Sourcing Management, Government Accountability Office.

ASSESSING WHETHER VA IS ON TRACK TO SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT APPEALS REFORM

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Assessing Whether VA is on Track to Successfully Implement Appeals Reform". Testimony was heard from Paul R. Lawrence, Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Elizabeth H. Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Team, Government Accountability Office.

THE OPIOID CRISIS: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT (FFPSA)

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing entitled "The Opioid Crisis: Implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)". Testimony was heard from Jerry Milner, Associate Commissioner, Children's Bureau, and Acting Commissioner, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Department of Health and Human Services.

PRODUCT EXCLUSION PROCESS FOR SECTION 232 TARIFFS ON STEEL AND ALUMINUM

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Trade held a hearing entitled "Product Exclusion Process for Section 232 Tariffs on Steel and Aluminum". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2018

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine the race to 5G, focusing on exploring spectrum needs to maintain United States global leadership, 10 a.m., SR-253.

Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness, to hold hearings to examine destination Mars, focusing on putting American boots on the surface of the red planet, 2:15 p.m., SR-253.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine American diplomacy to advance our national security strategy, 3 p.m., SD-419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: business meeting to consider S. 2554, to ensure that health insurance issuers and group health plans do not prohibit pharmacy providers from providing certain information to

enrollees, H.R. 1222, to amend the Public Health Service Act to coordinate Federal congenital heart disease research efforts and to improve public education and awareness of congenital heart disease, S. 2465, to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a sickle cell disease prevention and treatment demonstration program and to provide for sickle cell disease research, surveillance, prevention, and treatment, S. 3016, to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve essential oral health care for low-income and other underserved individuals by breaking down barriers to care, and pending nominations, 10 a.m., SD-430.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Joseph Maguire, of Florida, to be Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and Ellen E. McCarthy, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research), 9:30 a.m., SH-216.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Examining the Upcoming Agenda for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission", 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Full Committee, markup on FY 2019 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill; and the Revised Report on the Suballocation of Budget Allocations for FY 2019, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled "21st Century Cures Implementation: Updates from FDA and NIH", 9 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Environment, hearing entitled "Background on Renewable Identification Numbers under the Renewable Fuel Standard", 9:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled "Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission", 1 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled "Budget Priorities for South Asia", 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection, hearing entitled "Assessing the State of Federal Cybersecurity Risk Determination", 10:30 a.m., HVC-210.

Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, hearing entitled "Using Innovative Technology and Practices to Enhance the Culture of Preparedness", 2 p.m., HVC-210.

Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, markup on Committee Resolution 115-20, 11:15 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Full Committee, hearing entitled "Oversight of the Library of Congress' Strategic Plan Part 2", 11:30 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1872, the "Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2017", 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Management Crisis at the Puerto Rico Electric

Power Authority and Implications for Recovery”, 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Information Technology; and Subcommittee on Government Operations, joint hearing entitled “GAO High Risk Focus: Cybersecurity”, 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Affairs, hearing entitled “Federal Grant Management”, 2 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, begin hearing entitled “James Webb Space Telescope: Program Breach and its Implications”, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled “The Tax Law’s Impact on Main Street”, 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Social Security, hearing entitled “Examining Changes to Social

Security’s Disability Appeals Process”, 10 a.m., 2020 Rayburn.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to receive a briefing on attacks on Roma in Ukraine, 10 a.m., SVC–214.

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine the innovation economy, entrepreneurship, and barriers to capital access, 10 a.m., 1100, Longworth Building.

Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans: to hold hearings to examine how the multiemployer pension system affects stakeholders, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to hold hearings to examine the state of play, focusing on globalized corruption, state-run doping, and international sport, 2 p.m., SD–562.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, July 25

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 6147, Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, with votes on or in relation to Moran Amendment No. 3433, and Udall Amendment No. 3414, at 2:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, July 25

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Complete consideration of H.R. 6199—Restoring Access to Medication and Modernizing Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018 and H.R. 6311—Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018. Consideration of measures under suspension of the Rules.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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